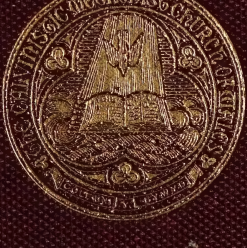
The Holy Spirit

Studies in the Fourth Gospel

By T. J. WHELDON, B.A.
BANGOR


The Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales

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T. J. WHELDON, B.A.,

BANGOR.

CARNARVON:
THE CALVINISTIC METHODIST BOOK AGENCY.
LONDON:
W. H. ROBERTS,
10, CECIL COURT, CHARING CROSS ROAD.

PRINTED BY
HAZELL, WATSON, AND VINEY, LD ,
LONDON AND AYLESBURY.

PREFACE.

WHEN the General Assembly did me the honour of appointing me to prepare the "Davies Lecture" for 1899, I considered it my duty to obey the call, although reluctant to undertake any additional work at the time, especially as the Lecture was to be delivered in the English language, and had to be published within a limited period.

The selection of a subject was the first difficulty. The following considerations led me to the choice I have made. The Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales is the outcome of the great Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century, which was so marvellous an outpouring of spiritual gifts and graces. The sole aim of the revivalists was to save men; and through them the Lord has done great things for our country. It was the Lord who planted the Calvinistic Methodist Church as a community in the land, and spread us abroad because He had a "favour unto us." This revival affected the whole of Wales, and entirely changed the face of the country. Our fathers were stirred by no questions of doctrine or of polity; they were in antagonism to nothing but sin. Praying the Lord to save their countrymen, they strove to attain this end by emphasising in their preaching the doctrines which are held in common by the Reformed Churches. In their care for the steadfastness and the spiritual growth of their converts, they came to gather and unite them together in small communities for fellowship and edification, thereby providing the best means available for their guidance and order. Out of this primitive organisation a distinctive form of Church polity soon developed, after the Presbyterian order. It was the regenerative power of the Spirit that gave our Church its existence, its doctrine and its polity. We found ourselves a Church without intending to be one.

This revival gave Wales its true saints and its ideal of pure religion. The type has for its leading characteristics simplicity, patience, sober-mindedness and an abiding passion for the salvation of souls. God, of His mercy, gave me one of these saints for a mother. What in her and in others seemed to me, as a child, natural has long become a heavenly mystery, humble, chastened and yet strong. The only explanation that can be given of such characters is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The time within which I had to prepare the Lecture being limited, I had to confine myself to certain aspects of the subject. Even so the work is but the gathering of material which I would gladly have recast had time permitted. I have consulted all the writers on the subject, ancient and modern, within my reach, as well as the works of many well-known commentators. I acknowledge my frequent indebtedness to many of them, even in expression.

I have received invaluable help from many friends who have cordially tendered their aid in various ways. Among them I ought specially to acknowledge the constant and valuable assistance afforded to me by Professor W. Lewis Jones, Dr. William James, and the Rev. J. O. Thomas, M.A. Other friends have also helped me very materially in the work of correcting the proofs.

Our emblem of the Dove and the open book, and our motto, "The Light of Life," point out the acknowledged source and sustenance of our religious life. May we ever realise the significance of our emblem, so as to enable us to appreciate and pray for those gifts and graces which the Spirit ever has and gives, and to praise God the more fervently when singing our well-known Welsh hymn—

"Tyr'd, Ysbryd Glân, i'n c'lonau ni,
A dod d'oleuni nefol;
Tydi wyt Ysbryd Crist—dy ddawn
Sydd fawr iawn a rhagorol."

EXTRACT FROM THE TRUST DEED OF THE "DAVIES LECTURE."

THOMAS DAVIES, of Bootle, near Liverpool, being deeply interested in the success and prosperity of the religious denomination known as THE WELSH CALVINISTIC METHODISTS, and being actuated by a desire to perpetuate the memory of his late father, DAVID DAVIES, who was for many years a faithful and consistent member of the said denomination, lately resolved to found and endow a Lectureship, to be called THE DAVIES LECTURE, in connection with the said denomination; and for that purpose, in June, 1893, paid to Trustees, appointed by the General Assembly, the sum of £2,000, to produce annually the sum of £50.

The Lecturer shall be a fully ordained Minister of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.

The subject of the Lecture shall be RELIGION.

The Lecturer shall be allowed considerable latitude in the treatment of his subject. While special attention should be given to the Christian Religion, it is not intended to exclude the subject of other religions.

Such topics as the following may be taken up by the successive Lecturers :—

The Definition of Religion.

The Origin, Growth, and Development, together with the Universality of Religion.

The Philosophy of Religion.

The Science of Comparative Religion.

The Jewish Religion in its various Stages.

The Christian Religion in its Developments and Corruptions, in its Doctrines and Practices.

The Relation of Science to Religion.

The Relation of Morality to Religion.

All topics fairly connected with Religion in any of its aspects, whether Theological, Philosophical, or Historical.

The Lecture shall be delivered in each year during the sittings of the General Assembly of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, at one of their chapels in the place or town where such sittings shall be held, and on some evening before the day devoted by the said Assembly to preaching; and the Moderator of the Assembly, or, in his absence, the Acting Moderator, shall preside at the meeting at which the Lecture shall be delivered.

Each Lecturer must, within twelve calendar months after delivering his Lecture, publish at his own expense, in crown 8vo, the Lecture, to take not less than 150 pages, and to be preceded by extracts from this Deed, explaining the foundation and purpose of the Lecture.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN CREATION.

Genesis i., ii. John i. 3-5.

IN the prologue to the gospel of St. John we are taught that "all things were made by Him [the Word]; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." The word "made" expresses a "becoming," a passing from non-existence into existence. The visible creation rests upon the invisible, so that all which "became" had its becoming in God; and this is why no explanation of creation has been given apart from faith. Nothing that became was made "without the Word." The negative statement in the verse is not a mere repetition of the previous positive statement. It adds the thought that what became by the Word was inseparable from the Word when it became. It contained a revelation of the Word; a glory and a presence came up with it as its fulness, which were a revelation of its Maker. As nothing was "without" the Word, all theories of creation, whether of old or modern times, which affirm the existence of other creative powers than the Word, are denied. "By Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible." The word "without" excludes such theories, because it indicates that the two things spoken of are so inseparable that the one cannot be what it is said to be apart from the other, which stands to it as its complement (1 Cor. xi. 11; Heb. xi. 40). The creative Word became revealed, and the invisible Word that was in the beginning appears by and in all things as their reason and their end. The archetypes of all things were in the Word as the potential source of all manifestation, "for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created" (Rev. iv. 11). The creation was in Christ before Christ was immanent in creation, and in Him all things cohere. The work is first of all in the mind of the artificer, and when made it reveals the thoughts and the character of the maker. The Word is before all, and is revealed through all, Creator and creation being inseparably presented to the eye of the beholder.

A redemptive mediatorship demands as its presupposition a creative mediatorial relation of the Word to the universe. The Word immanent in the Godhead had in Himself the archetypal world of all things. By Him as the revealing Word the totality of things in creation, providence, and grace was manifested through the Spirit.

Where and as the Word is, there, likewise, the Spirit is, whether it be abiding in God or acting in creation; and where the spoken word is, the Spirit of God is also immanent in the word. It is He who communicates to all things that which pertains to the fulness of the word that is realised in them, endowing them with physical, moral, and spiritual gifts,—giving to each as He wills, and according to its peculiar nature, so that it may appear objectively what it is intended to be by its creative word.

By the Spirit the Word is glorified in creation, for there also the Spirit takes of what pertains to Him, and communicates it, forming, beautifying, glorifying all, so that it be not "without" the Word itself.

"In Him was life" absolutely, for He was the source of all kinds of life (John i. 4). All life is spiritual in its nature, and is communicated by the Spirit, who, mysteriously endowing creatures with the principle of their life, gives unto all after their kind. That which the Spirit of God imparts to each is what each is and has.

All things are of God. They receive the word which gives them their being and their significance from the Son, and their power and efficacy by the Spirit. From the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit everything is what it is. While they receive their subsistence and the principle of their being from the Son, all things have their order and progress from the Spirit, both co-working with the Father, and revealing Him as undivided and inseparable.

The narrative of creation in Genesis gives no scientific theory of creation, nor does it give any cosmogony that ever yet was taught in the schools. Had it done so, it would have long ago grown old and ceased to be. It has something corresponding to all cosmogonies, and one system after another has been read into the narrative, and the end is not yet. The myths of the child-life of the race, and many other forms of the doctrine of creation, have had their day and are gone, while this grand narrative is as fresh and as powerful to-day as it ever was. Plato says that Solon enquired of the priests of Sais concerning the first man, when an aged seer replied, "Solon, Solon, you Hellenes are never anything but children, and there is not an old man amongst you"; which statement he explains by saying that their country was overwhelmed at times by a deluge which swept away all previous civilisation, so that they had to begin anew. The lore of Egypt, on the contrary, was preserved in a land where there had been no such deluge. In learning the secret of creation we need not begin anew; for the biblical narrative no power can sweep away. It has moral and spiritual conditions which change not. It is a prose psalm of creation, and the Spirit who framed the world inspired the song. In creation itself none "hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counsellor hath taught Him." Many have endeavoured to improve upon the narrative, yet none as yet has "directed the Spirit of the Lord" by giving a better.

This great vision (Gen. i. 1—ii. 3) is from eternity to eternity. It unfolds the roll of all the ages past and to come. A few pregnant passages sum up the past, and then we have a prophetic vision of the future. It begins in the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth; it ends when the heavens and the earth were finished, all the host of them standing forth in perfect array, glorifying God and being glorified by God, as the Lord of hosts. Having striven for perfection, and having now attained it, they are all "clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners," ready for the word of command to enter into God's rest. Throughout the narrative the doctrine of God explains creation. As a perfume exhaling the odour of moral truth, it fills the narrative, as it fills the whole temple of Nature, with incense. It explains the relation of the world to God and of God to the world. Science progresses on other and physical lines. The moral rules the physical and must prevail, and ultimately the physical explanation must harmonise with the spiritual ends which are discerned by faith. Scientific and philosophic minds wend their toilsome way "thinking the thoughts of God," and it may be long ere they shall stand and see in all its meaning this vision of the Spirit, which from the first stood at the centre of things.

God of His own sovereign will created all. He "in the beginning created heaven and earth," which free act is in full accord with God's sovereignty in providence and grace. In these three provinces God is a God who hideth Himself behind the veil of secondary forces. The first words, in their naked, simple grandeur, make a distinction between the Creator and creation. They give the death-blow to polytheism and pantheism. God's free-will and might in creation anticipate His freedom in providence, and both culminate in the freedom of grace. This lesson is taught at great length in Isaiah xl. to l.

The creative act was in the beginning. The eternal and the infinite became time and space in sequence and extension, and God limited His action to the conditions of the creature. Time is the mode of revealing the infinite in the finite, and history proper begins with man. Mill said that "providential government by an omnipotent being must be given up." This is true unless God be a moral Governor acting according to conditions that are based on the nature of things in general. As an artist is limited by the nature of the material he works upon, so the Spirit of God walks in creation at the pace of His creature. "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," is the first truth in revelation as it is first in the creed. He who sees this truth by faith has no difficulty in assenting to the word of Jesus that "the Father worketh even until now," and is not offended by new departures that are supernatural in nature and grace. This free personal act of God is the primary object of faith and the source of the adoration and reverence which ascend from all created things.

The second verse (Gen. i. 2) unites creation with God by the bond of the Eternal Spirit, which is immanent in all things; and so it undermines all deistic systems. While God is exalted infinitely above all in the first verse, He is united with all in the second, where all things become what they shall be by the aid of the Spirit, who is near all and watchful over all.

Nowhere in the Old Testament does the doctrine of the Trinity approximate more closely to a hypostatical distinction of persons than it does in this narrative; and John's prologue is closely akin to it. "Elohim" is said to create: "He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast"; and the Spirit forms what was so created. The word translated "create" (בָּרָא) designates the divine causality as unconditioned objectively, and the product was new and supernatural. Another word (יָצַר) is used to designate the formative power of the Spirit. This power is architectonic, artistic, giving each thing its law in its formation, its form and structure; and the product is a thing to be understood by reason.

In the first act of creation it was not manifestly so, for "the earth was waste and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep." The chaos was receptive of the Spirit because the Word was immanent in it; and because the Spirit was immanent in it, by receiving order it became capable of attaining further good. It could also return to its previous state, for the possibility of gain implies the possibility of loss. So the creation must ever be sustained. The words "waste" and "void" are used elsewhere to express moral deterioration followed by penal disorder and barrenness. Here the words express only the absence of goodness. Chaos was a substratum to work upon. It was not nature, but its matrix, and capable of progress. The deep was invisible and undivided, without variety and therefore without true unity, and the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the deep. It was darkness as being devoid of light, yet preparatory to it. The night gives vigour, and provides power for an awakening. It is the secret place where the mysterious processes of life are prepared for a birth. This preparatory activity is consistently ascribed to the Spirit of God. Each day had its night and its morn, and both together formed one day; for the endowment in darkness was followed by activity in light.

The Spirit, it is said, was "brooding" upon the deep as a mother-bird stirred by its maternal instinct, cherishing, guarding, and guiding its genetic impulses by regulative principles of law and pulsations of life. He brought out antipathies and affinities gently and efficaciously, operating in all as He formed the vast organism. Aristotle, and Hesiod before him, had a glimpse of this truth when they ascribed creation to a great love-soul, an Eros in the universe. So Milton sang—

> "Thou from the first
> Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
> Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
> And made it pregnant."

Having gathered bone to bone, and formed the world in darkness ready for the birth, God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." The Spirit illuminated creation with a great light, so that it appeared endowed with new powers, which placed it under new conditions of progress.

The result of each day's work was pronounced to be "good," which includes the twofold spiritual notion of utility and beauty. God saw that it answered its purpose, and contemplated with delight the unity in variety, the variety being subordinate to a higher unity, and the vast whole safeguarding each part and giving to each a relation to the whole. It was beheld also in complacency as an end in itself; for it had beauty, and that beauty was symbolic of something that was beyond creation. The whole was brimful of service and beauty, and so the work of one day became the foundation of, and a preparation for, that of another day. The two great thoughts which are involved in the "good" are Purpose and Beauty.

Purpose, as the practical wisdom of the Word in nature, was impressed upon all. What appeared under its guidance was new and old, the sure token of the divine method in all progressive developments. Each step in creation was intimately connected with that which preceded it. It was a necessary corollary of what had gone before, and it brought things to a higher plane. The new, looked at from below, is miraculous; looked at from above, it seems so natural that its idea can be easily discerned in the preparatory stage. Thus the Spirit brought out of His treasures things both new and old. The secret purpose which underlay the old becomes the ruling purpose in the new, and what is seen is at once both new and old—a glorified renovation. In the plenitude of natural gifts there is a strange economy, so that even the crumbs are not lost. The purpose in its fulness is inwrought into each part as by artistic fingers. By the care lavished upon it, it appears as some embroidery-work, delicate to invisibility and vast as the universe. "A grain of sand suffices to testify the wisdom of God, and a whole universe is at hand to echo the testimony."

Purpose being written upon all creation, God's "everlasting power and divinity" are impressed upon all. Through the whole variety a great unity runs, forming the whole into one vast organism. This bond of unity in all is the Spirit of God immanent in the world, and "the fairest bond is that which makes the most complete fusion of itself and the things which it combines."[1] In an organism each part is an end in itself, and perfect by itself, for the Spirit of God makes each part perfect as having an immediate message of its own; while at the same time it is subordinate to an end higher than and beyond all the ends that are made to serve the parts. "Let me tell you why the Creator made the world. He was good, and desired that all things should be as like Himself as they could be. Now the deeds of the best can never be other than the fairest."[2] The intellectual study of the sequence of things in nature is not incompatible with the recognition of final ends as discerned by reason and faith. Scientific enquiry is concerned with the sequence of events, and studies the machinery of the universe; and to ignore science would be to despise knowledge. Wisdom and goodness are concerned with final ends, without which all would be meaningless. Here all the phenomena are subordinated to intelligence and goodness. God works His great purposes secretly: "for as in civil actions he is the greater and deeper politician that can make other men the instruments of his will and ends, and yet never acquaint them with his purpose, so as they shall do it and yet not know what they do, . . . so is the wisdom of God more admirable, when Nature intendeth one thing, and Providence draweth forth another."[3] By producing what is immediate as if that were the sole object the Spirit of God works for another and a further end, as wheel within wheel; for the Spirit of life is in the wheels, and they are all full of eyes, observing the line of motion in every individual change, and observing also the advance of the whole. Faith alone can discern clearly the moral ends of things, and when scientific men try to explain how all things originated, and why they are, they must abandon the purely scientific standpoint. Faith passes at once to the invisible and the eternal.

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[1] Plato, *Timæus*. [2] Plato, *Ibid*. [3] Bacon.

The ultimate end of all the days of creation was man. His creation, therefore, is the purpose that runs through all. The progress is spiral, ascending rather than progressing on the same line, and in the ascent there is a night and a day, a hiding and a coming to view, a death and a life. Each day's work was pronounced good, and had its purpose in itself, whereby myriads of ends were achieved on the way, and all the ends were so directed that another great end should supervene; while all converged in man, in whom was contained the reason for all, and he, therefore, is the destined sovereign of all.

The regulating principle in the service of the parts each to each, and in their adaptation to ends, is termed "law," a word which points to some sovereign authority as immanent in nature. Law operates in all things, whether organic or inorganic, and constitutes their freedom, so far as the word is applicable where there is no spiritual subsistence. The shadow of sin in man has given to the term "law" an aspect of bondage and necessity. Law gives to all things their movement, their life, and their glory. It enables what it rules to be actively in accord with what it is essentially by nature intended to be. Law is the mode of service, the purpose in the nature and constitution of things. This service gives everything its value and dignity. When objects become related to man, he values them as they are serviceable to him according to their law; for what is so he guards and treasures as part of himself. What he does not discern as useful he neglects, until he understands its law; then he can use it for his own ends, humanising it.

This power of law is spiritual, and is the operation of the immanent Spirit working in all according to their nature. Scientific men teach us that there appears to be a great unity in all forces, and that the great powers of nature are all modes of some one great force, so that the universe is a series of perpetual transformations. A power ceases to be in one form and appears in another. Heat becomes motion, motion electricity, and air may be poured out as a liquid. Science must assume secret powers in nature behind all these forces. As yet they are only hypotheses, but they are necessary to explain the phenomena. The mightiest forces are imperceptible to sense and supreme over all that appeals to sense. They are assumed as postulates of knowledge. So scientific men have arrived at a point where they can feel the presence of some mighty power as the source of all. "They see the veil and desire to withdraw it, to behold the mystery that lies behind. They who have faith acknowledge that behind the veil they discern the features of a great presence, and ask, 'Who art Thou, Lord?'" Ultimately the power that works with authority in all forces will be acknowledged to be the Spirit of God. Life, also, with its instincts, is prophetic and an acknowledged mystery; and the very best explanation that can be given of it is, "in Him was life."

The whole world so framed and endowed is adapted for man, and for man in his present condition. In it is stored what is useful for him. It has its mine for silver and a place for gold, its iron and brass, and its surface is renewed yearly by the breath of the Spirit of life, Who gives to all creatures their sustenance. So long as man is a sojourner upon earth with his Maker "the meal in the barrel shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail."

The world is mysteriously adapted to man in his sin, and yet not left of God; for it is a place of discipline, where judgment and mercy are intertwined. Its conditions of labour, its night and day, its sorrow and joy, are all one order that conduces to the moral training of man. Death exists as subordinate to life. By the law of service, one yields his present existence to secure the welfare of others, and life is founded upon death. The earth thus appears to be a world fitted for redemption, and the "Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world" dominates all as the supreme purpose. As if formed from the ashes of an altar, it is a world fitted for the raising of an altar upon it. Each day as it passes away is glorified in the following day, leading up to the fact that the glorification which began in the Cross is the power that will glorify all that preceded it. This world is the battlefield where the issues of life and of death are to be decided. If it be a potter's field, out of its clay, moulded by the Holy Spirit, has been formed the body that is united to the Lord and Creator of all; and vessels of honour formed after its pattern continue to be framed from its dust. Creation was consummated in and has become the one great parable of Redemption. Redemption must, therefore, have been the hidden purpose underlying it all, and all culminates in Christ. John heard the whole creation saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain!" in a united anthem of praise, for Christ as the Lamb that was slain is the great purpose underlying all.

"Good" also contains the idea of beauty. All nature is beautiful. "Her ornament is another aspect of her work; and in the very act of labouring as a machine she also sleeps as a picture."[1] Man can divorce these two aspects of nature, and even place them in antagonism. Yet we ever find them as twin brothers in nature, and inseparable; and what God so united should in nowise be put asunder. One is seen as motion, and the other as rest. Utility strives to attain; beauty is pleasantness and joy in attainment. The one has its end yet to be realised, the other is an end in itself. Utility implies some ulterior purpose; beauty, though giving an intimation of something above itself for which it exists, is to be loved and cherished for its own sake. Beauty is the bloom of perfection, satisfied with itself. It may be asked, Is it a reality? and if so, What kind of a reality? Is it moral or spiritual, or both? It is both in the highest degree, where true beauty exists. *To be* is greater than *to have*; and the Gentiles in their worship, seeking material benefits, lost the secret of the identity of the useful and the beautiful. Utility appeals to interest; beauty is an object to be beheld and enjoyed. It is so nearly allied to religion that the faculties which can discern the truths of religion can also see beauty. Even a flower in a cottage is a solace. Its beauty is mystical, and, valued for its own sake, is precious, and it is preserved. Moses, when he was born, was "a goodly child." His life was preserved because his goodliness suggested a thought beyond the babe itself. His beauty was therefore prophetic. When beauty becomes sublime, it is an awe-inspiring and a subduing power, giving an intimation of infinitude and a sense of his own nothingness to the beholder.

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[1] Mozley, *Univ. Serm.*

The characteristics of the beautiful in nature are unity and variety, form and symmetry, harmony and proportion; and when seen it is recognised as spiritual, and gives the sense of true existence. To the useful it adds grace and dignity, tenderness of thought as lovingkindness, and infinitude of peace and repose. It touches the affections, and thankfulness is awakened by it in the heart that feels its power.

As beauty is moral in its character, it demands in the beholder qualities of perception which are moral. The two senses to which it appeals are sight and hearing, and these are pre-eminently the spiritual senses through which reason and faith act, and which deal with man's highest welfare. These two senses are taken by Christ to express the highest spiritual knowledge, and as the means of His own fellowship with the Father, Whom He saw and heard. In man, also, faith sees and hears. To the sense of hearing, beauty is sound, words, music, and appeals to the feelings. It meets the needs of the heart, and speaks of what cannot be measured nor weighed. It lays hold of nature in its symbolism, so that the ages of simple and enlightened faith are pre-eminently the ages of beauty in man's life and work, when his life issues freely from the heart and has its reason in itself. When it only partially succeeds, as in symbolism, it gives a sense of incompleteness, of a vast beyond, pointing to what eye hath not seen. One of the most sublime touches in the law of Moses is the absolute prohibition of all images of God as aids to worship. God cannot be seen personally anywhere in nature, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. The prohibition is thus a sublime statement of God's infinity. His shrine must be empty, or filled with an incomprehensible spirituality: which of the two it was to be depended on man.

God's glory as "the beauty of the Lord" is a weight (כָּבוֹד) of spiritual manifestation which flesh cannot see and live. It must be formed within man so as to enable him to bear it upon him (2 Cor. iv. 17). It is spiritual, and is experienced as a feeling, and "the beauty of the Lord" is the one thing needful (Ps. xxvii. 4). Intense feeling seems to paralyse thought, when it is in reality working a great change in thought; for truth must be felt as life to be possessed as true knowledge. We see God as He is in Himself when we see Him in His beauty. Christ in His beauty is more than all His gifts, and He is to be loved for what He is as all-sufficient. A child of God is beloved as being what he is; and every stone in the living temple is beautiful in itself as a perfect whole, and its beauty suggests the infinite temple of which it forms a part.

No natural beauty can be perceived in its true import except by the humility of faith, for its significance is spiritual as the crowning manifestation of the work of the Spirit of God. When it is so perceived, it becomes the Gate Beautiful that leads to the Temple. "It may seem strange to worldly men, but it is utterly true, that to pass through any of the entrances to the eternal Temple where the invisible Presence dwells, men must stoop. As with other doorways of the House of God, so with this. The grandeur, the splendour, the loveliness of nature, the gate that is called Beautiful of the everlasting sanctuary, is a closed barrier to the proud heart. One may stand without and wonder at the marvel of its adornment, but the door is shut."[1]

This beauty in nature gives no answer to the problem of sin. The heavens declare the glory of God; it is revelation that restoreth the soul. Yet there is a beauty which supplies an answer. Weakness and death in themselves mar beauty; but when death is voluntarily submitted to as a means, and when its darkness is penetrated through and through by a great purpose of love, it is sublime, leading to a thought far beyond it. Sin is ugliness, and death a terror; yet they may become a foil to infinite beauty. The Cross is the most sublime object in the universe of things, and an awe-inspiring spectacle that rivets upon itself the eyes of all who behold it. To those who behold it with the eye of faith, the sorrow and woe are transfigured by the rainbow of the covenant: "The glory and the gleam, the light that never was on sea or land."

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[1] Dowden, Sermon on "Beauty."

Thus in purpose and beauty nature and man are the garments of a great life, whose movements break upon eye and ear as the revelation of the Spirit of God. Visions are seen that beckon us to ascend higher, and incense rises upwards as from a great altar. All the movements of this life must be spiritually discerned and explained in terms of spirit and praise. Matter and spirit are united in man's constitution as a means whereby he attains true knowledge, and no knowledge is possible except through this duality. God we cannot see; yet we can discern the operations of the Spirit working in all around us. The universe presents itself to man as a witness, beckoning with eye and finger to the light where God dwells, and saying, "I am not He: He made all." Matter wakens spirit in man, and gives it a sense of his own freedom, for spirit is the reason and end of matter. Awakened spirit enters matter free, claiming it as its own by right divine, and all is plastic to its touch. Nature is a means whereby man may understand himself and his God better. He has a direct line of communication with God, and a direct relation with nature. God also has a direct relation with man and with nature. Through this triple relation man grows in his knowledge of God. He possesses the world, and, acted upon by outward nature, he gains a deeper insight into his own nature. He bends the knee and, seeing God, worships the Creator of heaven and earth. When at peace with his God, he sees Him in the light and in the cloud, where His cherubim cast the shadow of their wings as a blessing on his path. The lightnings, like seraphim, are the harbingers of showers of blessing. God girds the mountains with strength, and clothes the hills with verdure; He gives snow like wool, and distils the dew. The wind is the life-breath of the world upon which He rides, and the heavens are the curtains of His pavilion. All are present to Him, and He is present to all. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable."

II.

THE SPIRIT IN THE CREATION OF MAN.

JOHN i. 4. GENESIS i. 2.

THE terms in the prologue which point out the relation of the Word to God or to the creature denote the agency of the Spirit. So do the words "life" and "light" in verse 4. In the ante-Nicene period they were generally read, "That which hath been made in Him was life." The modern punctuation was adopted mainly to make it clear that the Holy Spirit was not created by the Son. This reading preserves the harmony of the tenses and, in accord with Scripture generally, ascribes the life-giving power, quickening energy, and breath of life to the Spirit, of whom alone can it properly be said that He *is* life. That the life was *in* the Word distinguishes the Word from the life. The Son is said to have "received life in Himself," as the Father's gift; and the Father's gift could be none other than the personal Spirit. Thus it follows that he who hath the Son hath the Spirit of life, and he who hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of His. "The Spirit is life," says St. Paul in Romans viii. 10, and this is the Spirit who raised Jesus, and not the spirit of man, of which it cannot well be said that it is life. The Spirit of Christ is life in men "because of righteousness."

"The Life" was the light of men, a personal spiritual principle, a conscience and a heart that show his relation to others, a reason and its expression by which man communicates with others in fellowship. The light *shines*. This word and its cognates are generally used to describe the work of the Spirit. The Son, in His personal relation to the Father, is said to be "the image of His substance." When the same relation is described as including the possession of the Spirit, the Son is said to be "the effulgence of His glory," the fulness, a shining forth; for here "The Lord is the Spirit." Life is the substance, light the life in communication whereby the Word is a revelation of God in creation, in man, in darkness, in the flesh, and in glory. Light is in man the *similitude* of the image of God. It symbolises moral goodness, conscious of itself and diffusing itself in all other persons who can receive it. The greater its self-imparting power the more glorious it is in itself. Reason, intellect, justice and holiness do not exhaust the meaning of "light." It includes them all, and is used to denote the infinite self-manifestation of God in Christ. The light in men is the operation of the Spirit, who quickened man with that life which made him an organ of revelation and the "candle of the Lord." The manifold contents of the light are the fruits of the life. Man's personality is the very life given to him which can in turn impart itself to others, provided they have the adequate receptivity. He may receive the person of the Word, become a temple of the Spirit, and one with others in personal communion.

The Spirit, who was above all and in all, prepared all for man. In man creation attained spiritual freedom, so that his appearance was supernatural in relation to all that preceded it, yet intensely natural when looked at from above. There was a council in heaven respecting his creation, for he was to have a direct, free relation to the Godhead, and was to be God's vicegerent in the world. The plural "Let

Us" implies a distinction of Persons in the Godhead who are united in the act. It seems fitting that the doctrine of the Trinity should be intimated in the creation of man, in whose nature the Trinity itself was revealed. Man is not the product of a fiat of creation, but of a taking counsel in the Godhead. The word "make" designates a progressive work. The Jews saw in the phrase "Let Us" some potencies in the deity that were greater than attributes, and Plato groped after the same truth in his archetypal ideas. Maimonides explains the plural as God speaking to all the powers already created, calling upon them to co-operate in the formation of man as the microcosm. God, indeed, acts immediately only when His immediate intervention is needed. That which can be done mediately He does through His servants. In man's creation, as such, they have no place; in the making of man when created they have a great function. The design was to make man "in Our image and after Our similitude." The "image" is the outline shadowed forth, and designates the type. Other creatures were created after their kind, and the "image" shows that man was related to God, who was the norm of his existence. All creation was in the Son, and known to God eternally, as comprehending Himself in the freedom of His purpose. Among all other creatures there was not one in the image of God; so the word "image" points to the Son in the Trinity as the divine root of the race and its distinguishing characteristic.

The word "similitude" designates the fulness of the outline in plenitude of power and endowments, so that by it man could be made to appear actually what he was in idea. The word points to the work of the Spirit,[1] who forms and endows what is created, making it perfect in all goodness. By both these, the "image" and the "similitude," man should be a representative of God, subordinate to Him in office, and having dominion over all, as the link between two orders. So made, he should be a prophet revealing God, a priest for all towards God and blessing all, and a king representing God and carrying out His will. The whole emphasis is upon his moral and spiritual relation to God. Having his being from God, he should of necessity be conscious of God in his own self-consciousness, and so think of Him as "Thou" to his own "I," by which he knows himself distinct from God. Man is therefore not in error when thinking of God after his own kind. The breath of the Spirit is the breath that he should draw, and knowledge of God explains man to himself, so that he can find himself only in God. Lost there, he can find himself nowhere else. He was to be a full manifestation of the divine purpose and design, and if obedient to God he was to possess himself in freedom, and the vast inheritance of all creation was to be his.

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[1] "Imaginem quidem habens in plasmate, similitudinem vero assumens per Spiritum," *Tertullian* v. 61.

In verses 26 and 27, taken together, we have the divine idea of man as he was created by the Eternal Word and as he is ultimately to become. Both verses embrace the future, and though the shadow of sin may pass over the scene, the great counsel of God stands firm. In verse 27 the language falls into poetical form, and the cadence of a song is clearly detected in it: "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." "Similitude" is not mentioned in the verse; "image" occurs twice—first, as "His own image," and again, "in the image of God"; and the word "created" occurs three times, which indicates the act to be divine in a threefold relation.

The divine word which became man had these three characteristics. In him a race was created: "male and female created He them." In the conception of man there was personal diversity in unity, and a unity of personality in diversity. Man as a person could not be himself except as united to some other person or persons. Personality is not a limitation so much as a capacity for possessing other personalities and bringing them into union with itself. Man is thus enabled to be what he desires and was intended to be. Man's true wealth is in persons, and there lies the inheritance provided for him. He is above all material things and animals, and must have persons like unto himself in order to realise what he himself can be. In the unity of his being there is therefore diversity of personality. This is the power which constitutes the race, the condition of man's progress and the means of perfecting each individual man. He is social by his nature, and all society in its grand superstructure is built upon the unity of a wedded pair as its foundation. This characteristic of man lies at the root of all that he holds dear, and it is that for the sake of which he has authority to lay down his life. Man was created a person, and this implies that he was from a person, and demanded a person or persons for his progress as a spiritual being.

So man was created in the image of the Godhead: "in the image of God created He him." Personality, therefore, was the essential characteristic of the image. It implies a mutual relationship whereby each is from another and for another, possessing and being possessed as a necessity of his existence in the freedom of love.

Personality being therefore the essence of the image, man was to be essentially free. Freedom is assumed, fundamentally, to be his heritage, and the impress of the "image" in the consciousness of the race. Freedom in every form is an operation of the Spirit. It is the foundation of man's greatness, and involves the possibility of his fall, inasmuch as it is conditioned by obedience to God. This privilege, as it is his glory, may also be his humiliation; yet it hinders him ever from becoming as the beasts that perish, for if he falls he must fall deeper than they.

Being free, man must of necessity realise this freedom by acting, in dependence upon God, according to the nature of the word that is in him, and so hold in joyful personal possession what God's creative Word contains. The command to him was, "Possess thyself and be what thou art." In conscience the voice sounded as a responsibility, and in the "must" of duty man could hear the calling from on high to ascend and become divine in "similitude"; for they to whom the word so comes are called "gods" (John x. 34).

Man, again, was in an especial manner created "in His own image," which was the Son. This image in man was in the form of a servant, and its law was trustful dependence upon God. The similitude—that is, the fulness of the image—was to be the work of the Spirit, as the Spirit of sonship, and this Spirit man could receive by obedience as his reward and honour. Man's state as created was one of law, and sonship could not be attained except on the condition of implicit obedience. The immanent Spirit in him was his help to realise this high calling, and to enter by works into a state of rest, where the filial relationship prevailed, and where effort and striving by works would be at an end. God is, and wills as He is, knowing Himself as what He is and does in freedom. Man, on the other hand, must obey, and know through the obedience itself the reason why he was called to obey, and so grow, working out his own destiny in dependence on God.

To help man, when created in "His own image," to gain sonship through obedience, God of His goodness gave him a command. God is free to give any command, yet He is not arbitrary. The sovereign acts of God have their reason in the moral attributes of God. The moral voice in conscience, heard as a command by reason, is the immediate effect of the immanent Spirit. If obedient, man was to have dominion over all things. Being free, and his duty being obedience, the relation between his own freedom and the "ought" of duty had to be solved by probation. Sin existed already in the universe, and man, as the representative of all, must enter the conflict and become free in sonship. God's Spirit in reason, heart and conscience was a sufficient aid in the probation. To have given less than sufficient would not have been righteous; to have given more would have nullified probation. Man's moral attributes were the same in kind as those of God, and the basis of his fellowship with God.

The Psalmist explains this for us in a song over which but a faint shadow of sin rests. In Psalm viii. appears the term "son of man" for the first time. The self-revelation of Jehovah was excellent on earth, and His kingly glory was resplendent above the heavens. In man a medium of revelation is found which transcends that of all the heavens and the earth. The lisping accents of a child are more potent than the voice of all the universe, and a child's beauty has a greater charm than that of the embroidery of God's fingers seen in the heavens. Man himself, as constituted of spirit and matter in union, is the effect of a word which reveals God. By his language he reveals himself to others as well as to himself, and the simple accents of childhood have a moral power and a kingly charm. What is man—frail man—that he should be an object of concern to God? And what is the son of man, the earth-born, that God should show him the favours of kinship? Compared with the universe, he seems to be nothing; yet quality is mightier than quantity. Man, though frail and earth-born, has the possibility of being crowned with the divine glory (כָּבוֹד), and has been made but a little lower than Elohim, which means the fulness of the divine attributes. To one who looks heavenward man appears pre-eminent. No other being can be seen to rise above him, Elohim alone excepted. He has dominion, therefore, over all things. He has power to understand the universe by his reason, and to reconstruct it in his own mind by thought and language. He penetrates into the nature of all creatures, and names them according to their kind. "Whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Wherever he is, and however low he may be, all around him feel his supremacy. When he stands, all stand in him; when he falls, in him all fall. He is set "to keep" his great estate from all harm, and no harm can reach it except through him. If he keeps his body—that part of his dominion which lies nearest to him—he will "dress and keep" his whole estate, humanising it all. The problem of his estate is virtually the problem of its owner, and to solve the problem of man is to solve the problem of the universe.

> "To thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Such was the ideal man. The particular man, Adam, the living embodiment of the idea, is said to have had his body formed of fine dust by the power of God. Whether this "forming" was brought about mediately or not is foreign to the narrative, and does not affect the freedom of God in creation. Much less do we, by pre-supposing that it was, deny the work of the Spirit. The life-breath of nature was individualised in the several creatures. Jehovah-Elohim breathed in man's nostrils His own life, and with a divine kiss man was awakened to become a living soul. While similar to other creatures, he was yet a spiritual being, and the Spirit of God was immanent in him. A quickening spirit he was not. But he is presented to us as a perfect, natural man. The spirit that is said to have been breathed into Adam was a prophetic spirit, and his life was fraught with untold possibilities. The sleep which is said to have fallen upon Adam when Eve was created was also a prophetic sleep. The breath of life involved the unity of the race, and a divine kinship ruled the bent of man's nature towards God. The state of his will was not one of indifference, so that it could be swayed by any trifles. God created man upright, and endowed him with power to work out his gifts in righteousness and holiness, so as to ensure immortality in sonship. To consider Adam's state as one of grace is to deny to him the essential condition of a creature. Some, observing how much good remains in the nature of man after the Fall, minimise the significance of the Fall. Others, who know the depravity of sin, unduly press the parallel between the state of the first Adam and that of the second. The former state was not that of the redeemed in Christ. Neither had Adam any superadded gift of grace, as Romanists maintain. Eden and its garden are gone, and "their place know them no more." The glory of that state was great, yet it was not glorified with the glory of the Gospel of

Christ. The latter starts where the other was intended to end, namely in sonship. Adam was potentially all that was involved in the divine counsel. Now the glory of Eden is a lost idyllic state. At its disappearance the Spirit of God walked sighing as a breath through the garden, seeking the man that could no longer be found in his uprightness.

Sin sprang up with the leap of a serpent. It is a mystery which belongs to the creature. It is the one thing that is not subject to law,—an anomaly, therefore in its nature and origin inexplicable. It was cosmical before it was human. It came as a usurper, turning man to vanity and robbing him both of purpose and of worth.

Man's sin is spiritual. It began in his spirit, where it turned the whole man away from God. Self became his centre, and he became "as one of us," having his destiny in his own hand and subject no longer to God. He entered into his own shadow—the shadow of death. The "image" was the personality, and this now became darkened, having no light from above. All things wore a different aspect, —distorted and terrible. The body, which had been the vehicle of his temptation, became to him a source of shame. A breach appeared between the innocent pair, and sin entered into the race-power in man.

Scripture speaks of the "image" as continuing in man, where its ruins proclaim its former grandeur. At his creation he had been pronounced to be "very good," and the Fall, actually and potentially, was great. Henceforth sin ruled man's nature, and his sinful nature ruled his acts, so that he became a child of wrath. Yet sin never became a part of man's essential nature, inasmuch as he ever feels as an oppressor that which had brought him into bondage, guilt and death.

III.

THE SPIRIT OF THE COMING MESSIAH.

JOHN i. 5-11.

IN the prologue it is said that "the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not." None else, not even the Baptist, could be the true, the essential light, but only its witness. In these verses the light is considered in its relation to the whole world, including Israel, to whom a special revelation had been given—but more especially to the wider sphere to which Christ was to come. The "light" was in the race. It was in Israel as the household which belonged to Christ. But the servants in charge refused Him admittance, both before and after the Incarnation. In this passage the relations of the light to the world and to Israel are intertwined, for the same principles rule in both cases.

Sin had entered the world, yet the Spirit of God was immanent in all nature and in man. Water (the quickening element in nature) and blood (the vital element in animals) were the means which the Spirit used for the continuance and the renewal of all things. In man, spirit was the life element which belonged to God; and belonging to Him it would return to Him who gave it (Job xxxiv. 14; Eccles. xii. 7). When God withdraws His Spirit from things in nature, they perish (Ps. civ. 29, 30). The Spirit of God left not man to perish, for the Word was in the race;

and where the Word was, the Spirit could operate. Moreover, God in His grace sought man in his guilt, and found him. The Spirit convinced him of sin, and he confessed it. Then the curse fell upon the serpent, and to man, spiritually dead, a mitigation of the threatened punishment was announced, tempering judgment with mercy. The work enjoined upon him became toil, and the continuance of the race, meant for joy, became a sorrow. God, in His mercy, associated a great promise with humanity's power of self-perpetuation and with its toil. In the result humanity was divided in twain—the two divisions ever warring against each other. One division He calls the "seed of the woman," identifying the promise with the race. With the other He identifies the curse of the serpent, and the "seed of the serpent" is a term of dreadful import as the Baptist and Christ have applied it. God put enmity between these two, so that, although they are inseparable through the whole progress of the race, yet they are in opposition. Nevertheless, there is a distinct indication of the supremacy inherent in the "seed of the woman" wherein Christ was immanent. The seed of the woman would "bruise the head of the serpent," which implies that where it met sin it would destroy its vital power, and so ensure complete and final victory. Sin hates what it is conscious of as superior, and in its presence recognises a danger to its own existence. The evil principle would "bruise the heel" of the heavenly seed, causing its progress to be slow, painful and full of toil. In the case of both seeds the image will eventually be completed in a similitude which corresponds to the ruling principle in each, and which is said to be revealed by a strange awakening. In the one case it is said, "I behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Ps. xvii. 15). In the other case the image will reveal other features: "As in a dream when one awaketh, . . . Thou wilt reject their image" (Ps. lxxiii. 20).

The promise of the "seed" given to the world was the basis of a new manifestation of the Spirit, as the Spirit of the coming Messiah. The Messiah was now coming in the race, and towards Him in various modes all the operations of the Spirit were converging. The Spirit was henceforth a gift of grace, operating in those who received the promise by faith. The Spirit of Christ, who was the promised seed, laid hold of generation and birth, as the race-power by which the promise was to be fulfilled. The sacred ties of blood kinship were in a certain section of humanity consecrated to the promise. Seth is presented to us as the starting-point of this cleavage in the race, and when his birth is narrated, it is said that he was the seed appointed in the place of righteous Abel. In the narrative of his generation alone are "likeness" and "image" mentioned (Gen. v. 3).

In the process of time the power of religion rooted in kinship grew less. The sacredness of the family relationship itself became weakened, for natural affections had become so corrupted as to possess but little spiritual power. The sacredness of human society was discarded, and the division in the race became fainter—a sure precursor of judgment (Gen. xix.; Rom. i.). And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever" (Gen. vi. 3); and, again tempering judgment with mercy, He greatly shortened human life. This, however, arrested the evil for a time only, and the Deluge came. After the Flood, the Spirit still continued to act in a similar manner, and a separation took place in Noah's family, where Shem is especially pointed out as representing the seed of the woman.

Soon, again, corruption appeared to be overspreading the world, and a new departure in the work of the Spirit took place. At the time when nations were forming and kingdoms were established with their distinctive principle of family relationship and nationality, a vision was given to Abram of a kingdom of God which he was commanded to go out and establish. Abram, the "exalted father," was elected by God's grace, and the promise was now to be confined to him and his offspring. Thus Abram, the "exalted father," became Abraham, "the father of many nations." The call of Abraham had a universal bearing from the first. This call and promise were given to him in covenant when he is said to have been justified by faith. While he was sojourning in Canaan, yet not mingling with its inhabitants, an event occurred by which the faith of Abraham saved the country, and the saviour of a country is its king, whether crowned or not. A strange figure comes upon the scene as a representative of "the seed" in the race—Melchisedek, a king, priest and prophet who saw the future hope of the world in Abraham, and so blessed him, transferring to him in trust the old hope of the world. After the blessing, we find Abraham deeply troubled in spirit because he was childless. In a vision of the Spirit he saw the innumerable stars, the created host of the Lord, and seeing them he believed the promise, resting upon "Him who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as if they were." On account of his faith, God ratified a covenant of grace with him. As the result of the ratification, "an horror of great darkness fell upon Abraham," because now the seed was immanent in him.

In Abraham we have the exaltation of faith, when man Godlike walked with God. The lineaments of the Spirit became more gentle and human in Isaac, and in Jacob, the twin brother of Esau, we meet with the true representative of the nation of Israel—lowly and weak without the Spirit, but a prince with God and with men through faith. The nation was properly called after him, for his chequered career was but a mirror of the history of his people. We find them in affliction in Egypt. But a mightier power than that of Egypt was immanent in them. God chose Moses, and breathed the Spirit of the kingdom into him who had been trained in the statesmanship of a great world-empire. God called him to be a prophet, enabling him by His Spirit to form a nation which would show forth the principles of the kingdom of God amongst the kingdoms of the world.

The faith of Abraham was the national spirit in Israel; and the only bond of union amongst this people was the Spirit of the promised seed, without which they ever became disunited. Nor could they ever renew their vigour as a nation except when Jehovah was exalted among them. When the holy seed was on the point of extinction, the Spirit of the Lord intervened with a strong arm, and brought them out of Egypt with mighty acts of redemption, working as the Spirit of Christ in nature and man. The miraculous is a part of the web and woof of revelation, for God reveals Himself not in words only, but also in deeds. Miracles are often looked upon as unnecessary accessories of revelation, and are relegated to a lower place than that assigned to them of old. In the opinion of some, it would be better still if they could be done away with altogether. But the Spirit of Christ must approve Himself as a ruler over nature; otherwise no salvation is possible, for salvation must include nature. Nature and morality offer insoluble problems of necessity and law, which in the redeemed must become freedom, so that the miraculous must be taken as the true test of divine salvation. Jehovah revealed Himself to Israel by the Spirit in great symbolic acts, each act, as a sovereign act of grace, demonstrating the truth.

Three great words occur for the first time in the song of Moses,—salvation, holiness, and redemption (Exod. xv. 2, 11, 13),—and the three are different aspects of the same truth. God's holiness is the zeal of Jehovah on behalf of His own, in whom He has put His name. They were chosen to be His people, and God's holiness was their redemption. Thus the Spirit of God raised an altar of service in the nation, making them kings, prophets and priests unto God.

The Spirit had now formed in Israel a national life similar to that of other nations "under the rudiments of the world" (Gal. iv. 3), yet totally different in its essential idea from all others. All of Israel born were not the true Israel, and the Spirit was ever one of grace, known only by His operations in individuals. The Spirit's operation was twofold. First, as the Spirit of holiness He produced moral excellence of character; secondly, He conferred spiritual gifts for office.

The work of the Spirit as the Spirit of holiness is well illustrated in Psalm cxxxix. This psalm is a noble utterance of the majesty of the Spirit in God's people, based upon His omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. These attributes, which are considered as non-ethical in their nature, are here described as the reasons for the operation of the Spirit of holiness in man. "Eternity," says Pascal, "is ever in time and in all of it; the centre everywhere and the circumference nowhere." The saints of old saw no secondary causes. Neither is there any word in Hebrew for "conscience." It was the Spirit of God they heard commanding in men. "In verses 7-10 the words 'Thy Spirit' interchange with 'Thy face,' as in Isaiah lxiii. 9, 10. 'The face' was an aspect of God's self-manifestation, and therefore personal. 'To see His face' was to receive intuitive revelation of His nature and character. God as He is 'can no man see, and live'; but with a faithful servant, such as Moses, Jehovah will speak 'mouth to mouth,' and the 'form of Jehovah shall he behold.'"[1]

The searching, omniscient Spirit had "searched" the Psalmist, and He "knew." He knows man's rest, his "downsitting"; He knows his activity, his "uprising": the two points that reveal the whole man. He understands man's thoughts before they take shape and form in his consciousness. As these thoughts appear, the Spirit's breath in conscience winnows them as a fan, dividing and judging all, whether motives or acts, for all are open to His eye. He sees the thought embodying itself in language before a word is on the tongue. He surrounds man as a living, personal atmosphere, and His hand of authority is ever upon him. He is more: He is to His people a defence as "broad rivers and streams wherein shall go no galley, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby" (Isa. xxxiii. 21).

As He is omnipresent, how is man to evade Him? Shall he ascend to heaven? There the Spirit is. Shall he descend to Hades? Lo! the Face is there. Shall he flee on the wings of the light? The "hand" shall be ever upon him, and the right hand of majesty shall uphold him. Darkness cannot cover him, and were the light itself turned

[1] Cheyne on Psalm xvii. 15.

to darkness, darkness and light are the same to the Spirit. The reason of it all is to be found in His omnipotence. In the formation of man's being the Spirit "possesses his reins," the secret place in man, as a sanctuary, and curtains it as His pavilion. Man is fearfully and wonderfully made. The Spirit forms him in the secrecy of motherhood, and the sum of his powers is known only to Him. He is as a book to be unrolled in time, and his ordained days were all written when as yet there were none of them. When he awakes to consciousness he finds himself with God, and sees that the Spirit has been with him during the night that is gone. Stirred by these thoughts, the Psalmist exclaims, "How awful I am! I am none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven," and, moved by a holy passion, he continues: "Depart from me, ye haters of the good, who take His name in vain. Thine enemies are mine because they are Thine. Search me, and see if I have any way of sorrow, and lead me in the way everlasting."

In the old covenant there were ordinances prescribed as a discipline. These shadowed forth a hope, so that the true believer found spirituality through the faithful observance of them. By means of them the Spirit of holiness wrought His work. The future lay behind the veil, which, while hiding, revealed. This hope found expression in the Psalms, in which the praise of the heart issued in spiritual songs of the kingdom, and in them the experience of the individual became the collective experience of Israel. How near are these psalmists to us, and yet how far!

The Spirit, as the spirit of gifts, raised men for various ministrations in the kingdom. Though the gifts were outwardly similar to those given unto other nations, they were different in their inward nature, because they bore the impress of the mission of Israel as a distinctive people. The Spirit was in Moses, and endowed him with wisdom and power to be the founder of the kingdom. He showed him the pattern in the mount, whereby Moses became a statesman in the council of Jehovah. To enable Moses to cope with the work entrusted to him, and at the same time to widen the influence of the governing spirit among the people, the Lord took of the Spirit which was upon him, and "put it upon" the seventy elders (Num. xi. 17). Moved by the Spirit, they became prophets. Eldad and Medad, who were in the camp, also prophesied, and when Joshua was jealous of his master's honour, Moses touched the keynote of another dispensation, and answered, "Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets!" The spirit of Moses rested in a special manner on Joshua as leader.

The Spirit of Jehovah rested on Bezaleel, according to Exodus xxxi. 3, in the construction of the tabernacle, with its symbols, types and figures, making it a structure full of spiritual significance. The artificer had a natural artistic gift, yet the power of the Spirit of Jehovah alone enabled him to combine the whole Mosaic economy in a fabric. To grasp the appropriate material and form in combination, an artist must possess the spirit that pertains to the work. The sacred builder was filled with the spirit of wisdom, whereby, while working out his thoughts and mastering the medium, he showed spiritual reality in appropriate symbolic forms. He dealt with heavenly patterns, wherein faith alone could see the beauty of the Lord, and so furnished a shadow of the Person of Christ, as God's dwelling-place amongst men. The shrine of the holy place was reserved for the coming of the Lord into His temple. As it portrayed Christ, it was significant of the whole universe, being an allegory of the coming Messiah. In the work the Spirit was toiling to disentangle from matter the idea of God as a Spirit. He levelled the place for the coming tabernacle, and prepared material for the great Master-builder, Christ. So also the same Spirit was active in the ordinances, rites and ceremonies of the tabernacle, building up progressively a typical symbolic service, unmatched for beauty, especially when lit up by the light reflected upon it from the New Dispensation.

After a great creative age there comes an age of lesser lights. When a people has been blessed with a great revelation of truth, its capacity to assimilate it is put to the test. The nation had been formed by Jehovah, and in the time of the Judges Israel was left with the tabernacle, its ordinances, and the framework of social life which it had received on entering Canaan. As the religious fervour passed away the people could not realise their own unity, and all did as they pleased. Revivals of the zeal of Jehovah passed over the tribes, uniting them more or less under men whom the Spirit pointed out as leaders by endowing them with special gifts. Of these, some had more, others less, of the marks of the Spirit, but the peculiar spirituality of Israel was stamped upon them all. Samson was a sign rather than a judge—a sign of the condition of Israel. The nation, like the hero, had the Nazarite strength of unconquerable spiritual power, inherited from its ancestors, and, like him, abandoned itself to Gentile alliances, and drifted to its doom, which, when it came, crushed the old *régime* in Israel. Yet, though crushed, it brought its enemies down by its own fall, and ensured for itself a resurrection of life, with new ordinances and gifts, new temporal and religious institutions. A

Pentecost of spiritual gifts fell upon the people which burst forth in songs of prophetic enthusiasm, and soon formed itself into an enlightening and a quickening power. Literature sprang up dealing with the glorious ages of the past and reaching on into the distant future. The typical character of Israel was so greatly enriched that in a short period the unity of the tribes was brought about, and the nation reached the zenith of its prosperity under David, who established the monarchy. David was of the prophetic school, so that in his reign the prophetic element became paramount. Seeing in the "roll of the book" a prophecy that was applicable to his own case, he ascended the throne in a spirit of obedience to Jehovah, and, looking upon a rejected Saul, he said: "Sacrifice and offering Thou hast no delight in. Mine ears hast Thou opened. I delight to do Thy will, O my God."

The kingdom of David, however, was not perfect, for in the perfect kingdom the priesthood and the monarchy must be united. He who was called the Son was also to be called a Priest, and the old ideal seen in Melchisedek still remained to be realised in a Son of David. David saw a greater than himself uniting all offices and rising as the morning without a cloud, His people gathered around Him refreshed with youth and vigour as by the dew of morn, and rejoicing in the plenitude of spiritual prophetic gifts and in the beautiful garment of priestly holiness (Ps. cx.). This future King, leading his remnant, like Gideon, and "drinking of the brook by the way," was to fulfil in a higher manner than ever before the truth which first dawned upon Moses, that "Jehovah is a man of war."

The Spirit of office chose the leaders of the nation and endowed them with the Spirit of the coming Christ, and they prayed the Lord that He would not take away from them "His princely Spirit" (Ps. li. 12). When there were no leaders, the people cried out, through the prophets, "Where is He that put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them?" (Isa. lxiii. 10-14). Yet when the Lord gave the people spiritual guides, they always rebelled against them, and grieved "His Holy Spirit," who operated in them. In their distress they cried unto Him who could bring them to rest "with the shepherds of His flock." Then by His grace they would enter into their rest; and as the sheep, at the voice of the shepherd, rush down from the parched hills to the green pasture below, there to graze and soon be at rest, so "the Spirit of the Lord caused them to rest." The sevenfold character of the spirit of gifts is described fully in Isaiah xi. All offices were potentially in the nation in virtue of its divine calling, and the Spirit of the Lord operated both in individuals and in families or schools as the spirit of rulers, prophets and priests. In all this there lay a prophecy of a great Person who cast His shadow before Him.

In the prophets Israel had its ideal men, who were in the council of Jehovah, and became His interpreters and messengers, not by heredity, but by the selection of the Spirit apart from all blood relationship or caste. The prophetic gift was not always theirs, neither could they explain how the gift became theirs, although they were conscious of the message. The Spirit, they said, fell upon them, laid a hand on them, overmastered them, so that they were not as before. Dreams, trances, ecstasies were often the means, which, as the gift became more spiritual in its character, embraced the whole reason and intellect. In a vision they saw and heard what was beyond their reach, and this they testified to. Prophecy arose along with the monarchy, and supplied its deficiency. Both waxed and waned together. The prophets were invariably opposed and persecuted in their day, and as invariably honoured when dead. They judged their own age, and, foreseeing the future, cut down or planted at the command of Jehovah. They pierced into the inmost nature of the world's powers around them, and exposed them to spiritual light. Each saw the Lord through the particular medium given him as a prophet, now in glory, now in lowliness, ever revealing the richness of His character. Their vision of Christ was progressive, so that what was given as nebula in one age became a cluster of stars in the next. When they were rejected by Israel, their spiritual eye discerned a "remnant" in the nation. When prevented from teaching, they wrote their prophecy and "sealed the teaching among their disciples." Rejected by unbelief, they looked forward to another covenant, wherein the Spirit would be poured upon all men. They saw Him also transforming creation around man, so that the spiritual man appeared to them in a spiritual environment, and in perfect harmony with it.

After the downfall of Israel, Ezekiel arose, the prophet of the Spirit in a special manner. The Spirit's operation is so vividly portrayed in his writings that they form the gospel of the Old Testament. Great visions of the work of the Spirit of Christ were presented to his eye. When he, the priest, was called to the office of a prophet, he saw all creation in its representatives, the four living creatures animated by the seven spirits of God, who make a temple of all, and co-ordinate the movements of all, so that those which seem contrary are really progressive. In chapter xxxvi. regeneration through the agency of the Spirit is described in vivid colours, and this is followed by the grand vision of chapter xxxvii., where the creative Spirit of God, having a fulness of spiritual blessing, rushes as a breath of life from the four winds to one point. Ezekiel is the first to grasp fully the idea that the resurrection is the work of the Spirit, for in this vision salvation attains its highest power in a resurrection. Isaiah has the same thought, and describes salvation as a resurrection granted to a dead Israel. "Awake, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of light" (Isa. xxvi. 19). No cloud can he see in the sky as a visible means of a great quickening effect, and the dew that will produce it is the dew of the stars, a veritable *rosa Dei.* When this comes "the earth shall cast forth the shades." In Ezekiel xlvii. we have the great vision of the waters which issued from the inmost part of the house of God, and flowed towards the wilderness of death,—a stream that became a river, and a river that became as an estuary of the sea, causing the desert to bloom and the waters of death to swarm with life. In chapter xliii. the Spirit is described as filling the house of the Lord with glory, for "this is the place of My throne, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever." The Holy of Holies is set upon the high mountain, and "the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy." The profane shall be sacred, and the sacred as the profane, all holy unto the Lord.

The Spirit was striving to be free from the conditions of law. Yet in man limits were set to His action. Man had to wait for a higher *régime*, which was to be established by the King of righteousness, the Priest who could confer peace,—the peace that "would be the counsel between them," when eternal majesty would be identified with eternal salvation.

In the second stage of the great revival, corresponding with the time of Solomon, we find human knowledge as wisdom-literature and knowledge of nature (1 Kings iv. 34). The intense religious experience stirred the intellect and directed it to the moral problem of life and to nature. The life imparted by the Spirit of God leavened other departments of human knowledge, widening the area of its influence while lessening the spiritual intensity. Man is essentially related to God and to nature, so that the knowledge of nature is not alien to man. The history of Protestant countries shows that the intellectual life owes its vigour to religious powers. In Isaiah xliii. 20 the rivers of the Spirit are described as becoming a joy to all creatures. In all ages, unless the relations of man to God and to nature are considered together, the application of the mind to nature alone may lead to doubt and scepticism. Intellectual activity and scientific knowledge owe their existence to the influence of the Spirit of God, though men may deny the parentage. For a long time among the Hebrews the Spirit of God gave a moral tone to the teaching, whereby men were instructed in the principles of reason and conduct. This teaching coped with the moral problem of man's existence, and also as the precursor of modern science investigated nature.

As the ages drew nearer to Christ the shadows lengthened and deepened over Israel. Legalism banished spirituality, and the light in their institutions became darkness. Pharisaism grew ever tighter around the tree of life, as a parasite sapping its vital power, and filled the abode of the Spirit with demons and terrors. The Sadducees, following the sceptical tendency of the school of wisdom, denied all that was spiritual. Probably the last words of the old canon are those of the Preacher, who was deep in the shadows. He beheld all man's efforts as vanity doubly distilled; yet in his pessimism he clung to a few eternal verities. He saw that man's spirit belonged to God, and that eternity was put in man's heart. He knew that man's moral dignity is responsibility, and acknowledged the nobleness of charity. Yet his cry was, "There is no new thing under the heavens," no place for hope, no opening door, no root of progress in humanity. If he be the last, the Old Testament ends with the saying, "There is no new thing." Turning over the blank leaf between the Old and the New Testament, what we first find is, that a new thing had appeared under the heavens: "the holy thing shall be called the Son of God."

IV.

HOLY SPIRIT.

GOD manifests Himself in the Word and the Spirit in such a way that what the Word is *for* the creature, the Spirit is *in* the creature. He bears a relation as direct to the revealing Word as to God, and is revealed as proceeding from both in being and in operation. This divine self-revelation has been made in divers manners, and various names are used to describe the relation of the Spirit to God, to the Son, and to man. He is described as the Spirit of God, of our God, of the living God, of your Father; the Spirit of Christ, of Jesus, of Jesus Christ, of His Son. He is named, according to the nature of His operations in men, as the Spirit of grace, truth, life, love, adoption, faith, power, etc.

The name, however, which is distinctive of Him as the Spirit of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, is "Holy Spirit," "the Spirit the Holy," or "*the* Holy Spirit." The first form occurs oftener than the other two together, and specially indicates the Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who dwells in believers. This indwelling of the Spirit gives to the Christian dispensation its distinctive character after the pattern of the incarnate Son. The other two forms refer to the personality of the Holy Spirit objectively, "the Spirit the Holy," emphasising specially the nature of His operations as holy. Holy Spirit is the name given to

Him who wrought in all persons that are specially prominent in the history of the birth of Christ. He also was given to Jesus, that He might reveal Himself in power. He is the Gift of gifts, the Father's promise to His people, the Spirit proceeding from and sent by the Lord in glory.

The Old Testament had prepared the way for the name by using it (*e.g.* in Ps. li. 11; Isa. lxiii. 11) to show forth Jehovah's saving might. In the later literature of the Jews He is also so called.[1] Here "wisdom" is described in words that are specially appropriated elsewhere to the Spirit. Wisdom is said to be a holy spirit, living, understanding, one and manifold, subtle, lively and undefiled, passing through all, a breath of God, and allied to immortality. It is a cloud that covers the earth. It issues forth as a brook from a river, as a conduit into a garden, when "Lo, my brook became a river, and my river a sea."[2] In Philo the Spirit is in itself indivisible, but distributed as fire from torch to torch. The word "holy" in the Old Testament is specially applied to the Spirit, who must therefore be the manifestation of the divine holiness.

The root of the Hebrew word "holy" is uncertain, though it may have had a history previous to its adoption to express divine relations. We meet with the word first in Exodus, when God claimed Israel as His own by redemption. The theophany in the bush made that ground holy whereto Israel was to come and worship. The blood of the Passover made the people a holy convocation (Exod. iii. 5, xii. 16). In the song ascribed to Moses we find many new words all allied, such as redemption, holy habitation, sanctuary and holiness

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[1] Wisdom i. 5, ix. 17; Ps. Sol. xvii. 37.

[2] *Ibid.*, vii. 22-25, viii. 13; Ecclus. xxiv. 2, 3, 30.

(Exod. xv. 11-16). At Sinai the people were called a kingdom of priests, a " holy nation," a peculiar treasure; " For all the earth is Mine, but ye shall be unto Me" (Exod. xix. 5, 6). Their election was a call to service under severe moral conditions, as a nation of priests. " Called from among men, for men, in the things pertaining to God," it bore a relation to all nations. It was a burning bush, yet not consumed, carrying out the divine purpose upon earth. The word " holy " as thus used stands in close connection with the name " Jehovah," the covenant name, the unchangeable in graciousness and mercy as well as in justice, the Redeemer and Judge.

The two ideas which seem to be expressed by the word " holy " are *possession* and *perfection* by salvation. God is holy because He possesses Himself in perfection, and possesses men, and makes them, as they are His own, perfect in sonship. It has been said that the word implies the aloofness of God from man, rather than His nearness to him. But this is not so, for the term " holiness " expresses God's nearness to His people, in that He communicates with them and dwells among them, and employs them as the instruments of the coming kingdom, having redeemed them by free grace and loving-kindness. The principle is given us in Exodus xiii. 2: " Sanctify unto Me all the firstborn . . . *it is Mine.*" He claimed for His own special use what had by nature another purpose, and communicated to it His own name and redemptive purpose. Places and times were sanctified, for they were His. Persons and convocations, abodes and utensils, all things holy were God's own. The consecration of persons or things necessarily implied a setting apart, yet the great thought which underlay the separation was that they belonged to God. His angels are holy, and do His will, whether as cherubim-clouds pouring blessing in gentle showers, or as seraphim-lightnings of judgment, the harbingers of torrents of rain. This possession rested upon redemption, which preceded it, for all things were cleansed by blood; and what was first sprinkled by blood was afterwards anointed with the holy oil, which consecrated to the divine service what had been so purified. The unction was based on redemption, and claimed the redeemed for service.

In this possession there were different degrees: "holy" and "most holy" or "Holy of Holies." The most holy represented what could not be realised as a divine truth except by the intervention of a divine agency. Such was the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, which was a shadow of God dwelling in men, the true Shekinah, the "dwelling-place." The atonement, the burnt-offering, the sin-offering and its altar, and the guilt-offering were not only holy, but so holy that they communicated holiness to other things pertaining to them. "Whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy." The temple sanctified what was in it, and the altar the gifts. Holiness was contagious, a power which aimed at the consecration of the whole earth. Holiness is a quality pre-eminently communicative, assimilating other things to itself. It is still more strange that all things under a ban, or pronounced accursed, were said to be most holy unto the Lord (Lev. xxvii. 28)—a symbolical characterisation which looks forward to the Holy One who was made a curse for us.

Another quality implied in holiness under the Jewish ritual was the wholeness or perfection of each object according to its normal form, being or life (Lev. xi. 45). The reason for this is the command, "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy," given by Christ in another form, "Ye shall be perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect." Jehovah's relation to Israel was the basis of Israel's relation to Himself in redemption; and again, God's relation to Himself is the basis of His covenant relation to His people and theirs to Him. Holiness in God is perfect conformity with His own nature, the sum of all excellencies, a self-possession in the fulness of glory. Possessing Himself, He swears by His holiness (Ps. lxxxix. 35), His self-defence, that which caused His name to be ever inviolate Ever faithful to Himself, He is faithful to His people, and they may swear in the name of Jehovah, and be His in faithfulness. Where He imparts His name, His glory will not be given to another. Sin causes separation, and takes away from God that which is His. When extraneous powers hold in unrighteousness that which belongs to Jehovah, His holiness is as a flame avenging the covenant relation with fiery jealousy. Jealousy is especially applicable to the marriage relation, in which one person owns another, and to which the covenant of God with Israel is so often compared. When His beloved is ill-treated, the zeal of the Lord flashes out to redeem him. When the people themselves are unfaithful, they are visited with chastisement and, if they return not, with penal judgment; and these are more awful than His judgments upon others, for His people have been graciously called into union with Him, "in praise, and in name, and in honour," to be a holy people (Deut. xxvi. 19; Amos iii. 2).

Holiness and love are therefore inseparable, for salvation is holy love keeping its beloved inviolate, defending it as its own, making it perfect, and saying, "It is mine." In proclaiming the salvation of Jehovah, Isaiah calls Him about thirty times "the Holy One of Israel," and declares that His people will be called "the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord." The Holy One is "Redeemer," "Saviour," "the Husband who made thee," "the Lord, their God." To Hosea holiness was forgiving love, "the Holy One in the midst of thee"; to Habakkuk He was "Mine Holy One: we shall not die"; and Isaiah's *trisagion* of the seraphim was sung close to the altar of salvation. So God, the Holy One who inhabits eternity, dwells also with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit. This great love may also become a great wrath. Redeeming love, holiness, and wrath are different aspects of the same thing.

In the New Testament the Greek word for "holy" that best expressed intrinsic excellence was preferred to the more common word used among the heathen to express priestly holiness. Holy Spirit is the full manifestation of the two principles, possession and perfection, the agent who both claims for His own service those who are redeemed and makes them perfect in the service. He is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, planting His banner where He comes in power, so that none can snatch away those whom He protects. He was the glory seen in Christ, the Spirit of His sacrifice, and His heavenly glory. By Him the Father ever possessed the Son in vital communion, and the Son the Father. By Him the Father and the Son possess men to whom His name is given, and to whom service is entrusted. The Lord's Prayer indicates its origin and end. "Our Father" is the divine source of all; "heaven" is the place of spiritual sovereignty; the "hallowed name" defines the Being invoked as one who claims and perfects His own. It is in and through His own that the Kingdom comes, and the aim and end of all is, that God's will may be done in such a way that heaven and earth become one. Perfection is the end: "the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly;

and may your spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved entire, without blame" (1 Thess. v. 23).

In the great prayer of chapter xvii. Jesus addresses the Father as Holy Father, the Father who makes others His own, and adopts them as sons. He prays the Father to keep "through His own name" those whom Christ Himself had hitherto kept in that name—the name Father which He had declared unto His brethren. This name, he says, would keep and perfect them, when bereft of His bodily presence. The truth had been given them, and they had received it as the revelation of the message of love to the world. Then He asks that they may be taken into the Father's service, as He had been. "Sanctify them in the truth," that is, "pour Thy Spirit upon them" for their work. As Christ Himself had been sent with the Spirit upon Him, so also He wishes the disciples to be sent. Possession by the Father includes their perfection, for so will "they all be one, even as We are One." As the Father was perfectly one with Him, and He perfect in the Father, our Lord prays that so it may be in their case. "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be *perfected* into one." By this sanctification in the truth, by this perfection in union with the Father and the Son, the disciples will be enabled to reclaim and bring others into union with the Lord, through the Spirit dwelling in them.

This possession and perfection will cause the Kingdom to come, and enable it to have a still further consecrating power over all that is related to it. To man all things have been subjected by the Holy Father (Heb. ii. 6-13), and to man belongs the dispensation of the Spirit, so "it became Him for whom are all things and through whom are all things" which have been so subjected, "to make the author of the sons' salvation perfect, for He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are both of One." God, to whom His own thoughts and purposes are precious, draws the sons into still closer bonds with Himself, and possesses in a still more intimate way the whole sum of things in Christ Jesus. Christ would declare the Name to the sons, perfect them by faith, and finally present them to God the Father as His own children in an eternal, free service of glory, consecrating in their consecration all things that stood in any relation to them, and saying as it was never said before, "*All is Mine.*"

The doctrine of the Spirit in Christianity was contained in germ in what preceded it. To the third Person a name is given which serves to show His invisible and active operation in communicating the infinite to the finite, yet without bringing the creature into a personal union with the Creator, as was the case in Christ.

Christianity is essentially the doctrine of Trinity in unity. Every religion is ruled by its idea of God, and the idea of a Triune God rules Christianity, which is a revelation of grace and truth. The doctrine runs through the whole of the New Testament. It is also interwoven with every grace and life experience. The revelation is not a metaphysical abstraction, but a life process. Life may create a philosophy; philosophy, or dogma, cannot create life. Revelation is a going forth from God of a word in power, that enables men to have a knowledge of God, based upon what God essentially is, and not merely upon an expression of His will. Therefore the doctrine of the Trinity is economical, a life process, before it becomes a formulated truth. We enter into fellowship of life with the Father and the Son through the Spirit.

Love, righteousness, and fellowship are personal distinctions, and are based upon an essential personal relation in the Godhead, for otherwise their revelation were not absolute truth. The oneness of God, which Judaism affirmed, Christianity enunciates in such a way as to constitute a perfect revelation. Jesus Christ claimed, and was acknowledged by faith, to be, divine, the sole Lord of conscience, the divine ideal of the heart in love, and the true life imparted by the Spirit, thus confirming and enriching the faith of Israel. A doctrine which denies God's communion with men, and cannot be expressed in the terms of human speech, impoverishes the conception both of God and of man. The doctrine of the Trinity grew silently and naturally in the Gospel narrative, and is confirmed by the experience of all the regenerated.

We meet the doctrine, on the threshold of the Christian life, in the baptismal formula, where men are baptised "into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is the charter of man's liberty, whereby he becomes united with the one Name that is threefold, and enters into the inheritance of grace in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—God towards, for, and in man. In the formula the equality of causal relation to salvation bespeaks the equality of the Persons, and gives the fulness of salvation by the union and the interpenetration of the threefold distinctions in the one Name. The early doxologies of the Church were an echo of the baptismal formula. Simple faith holds the doctrine of the Trinity without question, apprehending vitally the unity and the distinctions, without thinking it essential to decide whether, as the West taught, the oneness of the Godhead follows upon the distinctions, or, as the East, that the distinctions in the Godhead arise from the oneness. As far as Christian experience goes, both may be true. It is certain that the one God is adored as Father, Son, and Spirit, undivided, yet distinctly known. "I cannot think of the Unity without being irradiated by the Trinity, and I cannot distinguish between the Trinity without being carried up to the Unity."[1] Salvation is a living and experimental faith, and not an intellectual one, and John's "we know" is not "we have proved."

The word "person" may be very inadequate to express the distinctions in the Godhead, yet it is the best available. Personality in man is based upon the unity of human nature. Again, through union with Christ individual persons have the possibility of a yet higher union, which comprises greater hopes than could ever dawn upon man's mind, clouded and isolated as it is by sin. Human nature is not exactly alike in any two persons, yet there is in Christ a perfect communion of all believers. In the Godhead each Person has the divine nature according to the personal distinction, whole in each and each wholly in the other. We should guard ourselves against looking upon the Trinity as tritheistic, though we often fail in thought, but never in faith, to see the Three in the One.

In 2 Corinthians xiii. 14 love is ascribed to the Father, grace to Christ, and communion to the Holy Spirit. The pre-supposition of grace is love, and communion is the union of love and grace. The word "communion" is more than mere communication of one's own, for when used of alms-giving it signifies common participation, "an appellation full of equality."[2] These words express the distinctions in the Trinity in the economy of grace. The mind, however, cannot rest in this economical relation. It is necessarily compelled to go a step further, and to understand such words as expressing an essential relation in the Godhead, and so, to say that "fellowship" in the Trinity itself is through the Spirit. In salvation He is our fellowship with the Father and the Son, and He is the agent by whom God enters into a reciprocal relation of life with man. If prominence be given to the Spirit apart from the Son, it leads to fanaticism, and to depend upon the work of the Son apart from the Spirit is to offer sacrifice with strange fire. To hold the idea of Fatherhood without the Son and the Spirit is rationalistic, and sonship based only on the Incarnation is pantheistic. The Spirit is divine fellowship in the Godhead, where all relations are personal, and to this corresponds the fellowship of saints through the same Spirit.

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[1] Gregory, xiii.

[2] Bengel.

In 1 Corinthians xii. 4-6 we have the Trinity of gifts, which have their source in the Father, are dispensed by the King Christ Jesus, and are administered by the Spirit to each as He wills, His will being also the will of the Father and the Son. The gifts of the Spirit are in men, and the recipients of the gifts are themselves gifts, as they partake of Him. The Spirit Himself is eternally the gift of the Father to the Son, and by possessing Him the Son is said to be ever "towards the Father" as Word, Eternal Life, and Paraclete (John i.; 1 John i. 2, ii. 1). The Spirit is the gift of the Father and the Son to faith, and each believer has by Him the life and the love of God in himself (John v. 42). Every such gift has in it something which postulates the Father, the Son and the Spirit. The *perichoresis*, or the interpenetration in the Trinity, is also seen in all the gifts of salvation—the Father in the Son, the Son in the Father; the Father and the Son in the

Spirit; and the Spirit in the Father and Son—the unity of eternal life.

It is also said that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii. 17). The Father represents the necessity of the divine order to the Incarnate Son, the Servant who obeyed His command. The Son as the Servant had the impulse to reveal the Father's will through the Spirit, who is the principle of freedom that unifies both. This truth also must have its ground in the Godhead, and we have reference in 1 Cor. ii. 10 to the mystic relations in the Trinity, where the words "the Spirit searcheth the deep things of God" signify that the Trinity possesses itself in absolute divine freedom. We find the Trinity of union in Ephesians iv. 4-6, where the Spirit is the bond, being essentially in God what He also is in redemption. The New Testament is replete with instances, more or less clearly expressed, of this threefold relation. It is also apparent in the great redemptive acts of the incarnation, the baptism, the death, and the resurrection of our Lord.

The Church has taken its expression of the mystery of the Spirit in the Trinity from John xv. 26, where He is said to proceed from the Father and to be sent by the Son. The words refer to the mission of the Spirit, but without thereby being the less applicable to the mode of existence in the Trinity. The Septuagint had prepared the way for this use of the word "proceeding" by adopting it to express what issues out as a stream or a spiration. In Ezekiel xlvii. 1 and Exodus xxv. 35 it is applied to types of the Spirit. All such human words have their necessary limitations, yet they are the best available to show forth the truth breathed into them.

The whole Church teaches that the Holy Spirit "proceedeth from the Father." The Eastern Church adds the word "only," and the Western, "and from the Son," as by one spiration. The Western addition was made in order to defend the co-equality of the Son and, soon after, the co-equality of the Spirit against Arian tendencies. The Church, having once fixed upon the word "procession," derived a light from it upon all other truths as from a central point. It affirmed the true deity of the Spirit, equal with the Father and the Son in substance and glory. There is no irreverence implied in the words added by either section of the Church. A faith inadequately expressed may be as powerful for good as when it is apprehended more fully. When it is more fully expressed, to take a position of denial may weaken the spiritual power of the whole doctrine, so that the doctrine of the Spirit has more power in the Western than in the Eastern Church. Jesus says, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father." The words "I will send" imply the Western *filioque*, or, that the Spirit proceedeth also from the Son; "from the Father," imply the Eastern "through the Son." The words "from the Father" and "through the Son" denote the mediation of the Son, and "I will send" indicate the divine nature of the mediation. Jesus Christ speaks of the Spirit now as greater than Himself, now as equal to Himself, but never as inferior to Himself. A divine person alone could fill and more than fill Christ's place upon earth.

The word "from" signifies "from beside" (παρὰ), and not "'out of' the Father" (ἐκ), and both the Son and the Spirit are said to go "from beside" the Father. The word "out of" in the creed of Constantinople may have been taken from 1 Corinthians ii. 12, where the Spirit is said to be "out of" God. The term "from beside" emphasises the mission, and "out of," the essential inward relation. Christ also uses the word to express His oneness with the Father in His mission, for which He had the Spirit as His own. He also says, "I sanctify Myself," showing "that the Word Himself gives to Himself, as Son of man, the Spirit."[1] The Spirit is not described as the "Spirit of the Father," but He is called "the Spirit of Jesus," to whom the Father "gave" to have life in Himself, and that life should proceed from Him.

The first truth in John xv. 26 is that the Paraclete *comes*. He was waiting to come, and having prepared the way in Jesus Christ, He now voluntarily comes of His own will to dwell in men. The authority of His mission is given in the phrase "whom I will send." Jesus, who has all authority in heaven and earth committed unto Him, sends Him. The Spirit receives His mission from the Son, which is analogous to the mission of the Son from the Father, a coming from God to the world, a mode of being under other conditions than those of divine glory, a presence with men as an incarnation in the one case, and an indwelling in believers in the other. In John xiv. 26 the Spirit is said to be sent also from the Father, but in the name of Christ, or in His revelation and with His authority, and as the Father's gift. He is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of truth, His other self. His message includes the Fatherhood of God and what the Son is as our Lord. The differentiation and the identity of persons in the verse are complete. Coming is not the same as being sent, neither is the sending the same as "proceeding"; yet the three meet in the one Spirit. He is the Spirit who had a going forth before, but came now in a manner incomparably more glorious in the revelation of Jesus Christ. In the gospel of St. John the Father is called "God," "the only true God" (xvii. 3), "Father, God" (vi. 27). With Him the Son and the Spirit are one (x. 30), and where the Son and the Spirit are, the Father is seen and heard (v. 37). The Father sends, and gives the Son and the Spirit (iii. 16, xiv. 26); the Son sends the Spirit from the Father (xv. 26, xvi. 7). The Son and the Spirit go forth from the Father (xv. 26, xvi. 28)—the Son in the Father's name, and the Spirit in the Son's name (v. 43, xiv. 26). The Son glorifies the Father (xvii. 1), the Spirit the Son (xvi. 14), and in the Son the Father (xiv. 13). The Father glorifies His own name, and the Son glorifies the Father, being glorified Himself by the Spirit (xii. 28, xvii. 1). The Father is glorified and not sent; the Son is sent of the Father and glorified by the Spirit; the Spirit is sent and is not said to be glorified.

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[1] Athanasius.

The Spirit is not recognised objectively, as the Father and the Son are. Acts are spoken of as done in the name of the Father and "in the name" of the Son, whereas it is not said that anything is done "in the name" of the Spirit. His name is included in the one "name" of the Trinity, but the world cannot receive Him, and sees Him not. The knowledge of God, or His "name," is given to man by nature and by revelation; the name of Jesus also is historically given: the Spirit is not thus presented. It is not His name that leaves an impress, but Himself. He is the root of the spiritual man, who, begotten of Him, knows and sees Him. He comes not in the manner called "name," but has a name written in man, and He is hidden behind the lattice of personal being. He is in the Church after the manner of Jesus in the flesh, as in a body of humiliation, as a glory in weak men, by whom He carries on the mission of Christ, and His glory will be the glory of the sons when God will be all in all.

The history of the doctrine of the Spirit follows the same order as that of the Trinity. The relation of our Lord to God and to men had first to be formulated. But it was found that the doctrine of the deity of Christ could not be safe-guarded without formulating the doctrine of the Spirit. The deity of the Spirit was always held by faith, but the Church formed its creed as necessity dictated. Intellectual errors soon spread and ramify into all branches of life, in thought and conduct, and sap their moral foundations. In the Council of A.D. 381 we first find belief declared "in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father, who is to be worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son, and who spake through the prophets." In the Synod of Toledo, in A.D. 589, the clause *filioque* was added, and continues in the creed of the whole Western Church.

V.

THE INCARNATION.

John i. 14.

WHEN the fulness of time came, the Word became flesh. This means more than that the Word was in man. The Word became flesh, or assumed human nature. He now came personally into our nature. While He was present in all as their reason, He was not personally identified with any man previous to the Incarnation. It is not without reference to this difference that St. John calls Him "the Word" when explaining His relation to creation, and calls Him "the Son" when He became flesh. It is right to attribute all that the Word is said to do to Christ, but it would be wrong to attribute what Jesus Christ did to Him as the Word. To say that the Son is in all nature is not true, but to say that He who is in all things is the Son is true. The Incarnation is sonship in our nature, the revelation of God as a Father.

The Father, through toilsome generations of progress, had, by the Spirit, been preparing the way of the Lord. The world had gained ideas of wider range in all branches of human thought. Words and institutions were ready to be infused with a higher signification. Politically, socially, and intellectually, the time appeared to be ripe, objectively considered, for the coming of Messiah. The subjective moral preparation was, however, of far greater importance, and had now culminated in two aspects, both alike of the greatest consequence. The end of days had fallen upon the earth, and the period, as one of judgment, marked a change which would decide the destiny of the world. A few chosen vessels of the Lord, "as the shaking of an olive tree" (Isa. xvii. 6), were left solitary, helpless, praying the Lord to visit His people. They were the poor in spirit who thirsted for a new life. Heavy laden with legalism, and weary of it, as it no longer yielded any sustenance, they were dying to the old before the new appeared, and their cries were expressed, and may still be heard, in the cries and the spiritual longings of many a psalm. They saw the Spirit in so far as He was reflected in their own need. They also saw that their comfort would come in a Person in whom they would find rest. This preparation for another era proceeded while the old national life was decaying. On the other hand, the sinful condition of the world had resulted in the dissolution of human society. The ties which had been considered sacred, and more precious than life, were being loosened. The ties of family and of blood relationship, love of home and nationality, and the worship of something which was instinctively considered divine, and which gave divine sanction to all that men held holy and sacred in human relationship—all these were being set aside and considered as naught. The religious sense is the anchorage of men. The world, now broken from its moorings, was drifting to destruction, and there remained but "a fearful expectation of judgment." A few holy men and women were specially provided by the Holy Spirit as leaves to shelter the tender bud, just sufficient for its safety and no more. Mary, the daughter of grace; Simeon, righteous and devout, a symbol and a representation of the Old

Dispensation in his day, who, being burdened with years and filled with the Holy Spirit, and having received a promise "that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ," looked for the consolation of Israel, and, holding the Child in His arms, blessed God, and said, "Now lettest Thou Thy bondservant depart, O Master, according to Thy word, in peace";[1] Anna, the prophetess, who, "coming up at that very hour," gave thanks, and spake of Him as the redemption of Israel, as the lowly shepherds of the hills at Bethlehem had previously done—these and such as they were its defence.

"His goings forth were from everlasting" (Micah v. 2). God was ever going forth from Himself in the Word and the Spirit, in order to become the principle that drew all to Himself. The ethical principle in the Godhead was ever coming to view, and was now fully revealed in Jesus—in Him who was Son of God and Son of man, the crown of humanity, and the root of the new spiritual man created after God in the righteousness of Sonship and the holiness of truth. All that went before Him proclaimed His coming. Creation and Providence, angels and men, institutions and offices, laws and ordinances, all in the march of the ages heralded His coming, saying, "We are not He, but have been sent before Him." When He came "He went before" all, took precedence of all, for He was before all as the primary eternal reason of their existence, and had now become the ideal of all. The creative power which had caused all to appear was in Christ. Henceforth He goes before all, drawing all to the Father, as the light of men, so that the Alpha becomes also the Omega.

In fulfilling the old dispensation, although not of it,

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[1] Luke ii. 29 (R.V., marg.).

He was nevertheless under its conditions. His coming was the realisation of all that had gone before, as He brought forth out of His treasures things both new and old, which were not distinct or parallel, but united on a higher plane, as the word "fulfilment" implies. Fulfilment is not a mere addition to what existed before, but qualitatively a new thing. Redemption is not a branch of creation. It is the greater thought that underlay creation, and that in which the norm has become the end, and the primary cause the final. The Incarnation has fulfilled all by revealing the secret mystery that was working in all. Christ is essentially "the coming One,"—coming again and again in ancient days, coming in the flesh, coming by His baptism, coming now. Christ is always He "who is to come," the divine reason of all, and the heir of the ages.

The Incarnation was to humanity its predestined end, conferring upon our nature a fulness of a higher kind than that of creation. In Jesus there existed from the first the power of creating a new epoch, the potency of the man renewed by the Spirit who was the principle of His life. The essential idea of man is that he represents the Godhead in the discharge of an office. This idea is realised in Christ through His historical Sonship. Jesus Christ came as the Eternal Son, and inasmuch as office belongs essentially to our nature, and not to the Godhead, it was through the flesh and by the Spirit that He became Prophet, Priest and King. He thereby realised Sonship in the form of a servant. The Incarnation was neither a development nor a restoration. It was a new thing, which, although new, retained all the relations which flesh already possessed. Man's identity continues through all changes and in all circumstances. So also the relations of humanity are identical in Christ with what they ever were, though brought into union with the divine. No law was abrogated, and no essential relations were abolished. At the same time, all is new, and the possibilities of our nature in height and depth are seen as they were never seen before. To see our nature honoured by being united with Deity helps us to pity it in its degradation through sin, and the Spirit who lifts our eyes to the right hand of Majesty in the heavens enables us to realise more truly the shame and sorrow of sin. The nearer we are to Christ, the nearer also are we to man.

The conception and formation of the human nature of our Redeemer is expressly ascribed to " Holy Spirit." The words Spirit, Spirit of God, Holy Spirit are regarded as proper names, and so the customary latitude regarding the use of the article is extended to them. " Holy Spirit " without the article is not the influence of the Spirit, but the Spirit personally and peculiarly as the Spirit of the Father, in His self-manifestation of Fatherhood, and of Jesus Christ His Son, in His Sonship. Dorner's contention, that in the birth narrative the expression signifies the influence of the Spirit, is plainly against the constant use of the term Holy Spirit as designating the Spirit of God, the Father personally in the Incarnate Christ. To Him, so called, the whole work is ascribed, and it was as the Holy Spirit of the Father that He spake and wrought in all the persons that had any part in the inspired narrative of the birth.

The Spirit operates where the Word operates, and as the Word acts, so does the Spirit, so that where the Word is personal, the Spirit also is personal in the Word. There were two wonders in the person of Christ—Himself as the Word incarnate, and the indwelling of the Spirit in Him. The Word was the creative cause of the Incarnation, and the Spirit was the conceiving, quickening, and forming agent. Mary was told that "no word from God shall be void of power." The mystery of the Incarnation is but a higher form of the mystery of all creative agency, where what comes into being is related to what existed before in God. The Spirit was ever free Himself, and constituted the freedom of the Word wherever manifested. In creation He wrought in such a way that the creature might appear free, and was both the reason and the glory of the creative Word. "What is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear" (Heb. xi. 3); and the parts being created by the Word of God, were framed as organisms in various relations to show forth the Word that gave them their being. The work of forming and manifesting the manifoldness and the unity of all creation, its plenitude of capacities and its co-ordination for a purpose, is always ascribed to the Spirit, and the Word is revealed in things created through the Spirit. Faith sees not only the adaptation of created things to a purpose, but it also sees that the adaptation was in the creative Word itself, and became visible along with what was created, as its divine glory. The Incarnation is an act of God by the Holy Spirit, that is, the Spirit of God as Father, and of the Son as Son. Jesus was begotten of the Holy Spirit, and faith beholds Him as the one who was ever a Son, so that the fact that the Word became flesh appears perfectly natural, though mysterious and incomprehensible.

Christ's humanity was created by the Word; so that He who created all created His own tabernacle out of human nature by the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born shall be called Holy, the Son of God." The substance as conceived by the Holy Spirit is holy. It broke the entail of depravity while it preserved all the responsibilities of the race. There was no immediate communication of the personal essence of the Spirit. The Word alone assumed our nature and He had the Spirit. Dr. Owen, as Damascenus had done before him, states "that the only singular immediate act of the person of the Son on the human nature was the assumption of it." But in the act the Trinity participated more than by complacency and good pleasure, although it is true that the Second Person alone assumed our nature. The creation and the assumption are two aspects of one act. The work of forming by the Spirit, as the power of the Most High, went along with the assumption of our nature on the part of the Son by the same Spirit. The Son thus brought our nature into an indissoluble union with Himself, into which He entered of His own condescending will, and by which the relations of our nature became His own personal relations as our Mediator. The union was the work of the Spirit, and as He ever dwells in the Word, the Holy Spirit is the abiding fellowship of the two natures in the Person of Christ. By Him the divine Person is revealed, and the revelation is human. This incomprehensible act of the Word becoming flesh is the great miracle of salvation. The resurrection corresponds to it so far as the resurrection also was the act both of Christ Himself and of the Godhead in unity. The neuter, "thing born," signifies the nature before it manifests its character in act. This was born holy, and was to be called "Son of God." So the Son took our flesh, and the Trinity of salvation was concerned in the act.

The humanity of Christ, formed by the Holy Spirit, was perfect in every human capacity, active and passive, in soul and body, the nature itself being in absolute perfection, which cannot be predicated of any mere human person. Men have by their birth an aptitude for the work that is to fall to their lot, and a Jeremiah and a Paul could acknowledge that their natural formation as men pointed to the work entrusted to them. In a far higher manner was the humanity of the Word framed, fitted, and adorned by the Spirit, as the greatest act in creation, to be the perfect dwelling-place of God among men. He assumed not a human personality already existing, but the nature, which expresses the solidarity of the race and has in it universality. By the Incarnation Christ became the heir of all that is human, and the head of the race, in whom all, without distinction of sex, nationality, condition, or character, find their great exemplar.

" Holy born " of the Holy Spirit points to the fact that the Incarnation was ethical, and signified salvation. It was therefore fitting that the humanity of Christ should be so formed as to be the organ of the work of salvation. Therefore it is said, " There is born to you this day a Saviour which is the anointed Lord." He bore the dual character from His very birth. The chrism was His from the very birth, and the Spirit dwelling in Him was the chrism, and so he was called Christ "the anointed." Faith, through the Holy Spirit, worshipped Him in His infancy, and hailed Him as a Saviour. Within this root of salvation lay potentially all that could subsequently appear in the offices of Prophet, Priest and King—offices which, in their due season, would spring from the Saviour born. The one word which shows the nature, capacity and aptitude of Jesus, as born, for His mission is "Saviour."

It is said that Christ "took hold of the seed of Abraham" (Heb. ii. 16). Even if the meaning be that He takes hold of believers as their Captain to lead them to glory, it is founded upon the twofold union that is mentioned before —namely, that with the Father (ver. 11), and that with men (ver. 14). He took hold of and united humanity with His own Person, and so He was made in all things identical with His brethren. Since they were partakers of flesh and blood, He also partook of the same "in like manner"—a likeness that is not identity, yet is deeper than similitude, as of one who was of the same nature, parallel in all things and in close resemblance. Christ's human nature is described also as the "similitude of sinful flesh." He partook of the weaknesses and of the sensibilities of sinful flesh—that is, of those which in us are sinful. In virtue of this participation He bore all the consequences of sin, its pains and sorrows, and was both morally and physically more human than Adam or any other human person.

That He was born holy implies more than sinlessness. It has a positive meaning. His humanity was holy by creation, and did not become holy: for it had the Holy Spirit dwelling in it. As "holy" signifies that the human nature of Christ was full of redeeming love,—the love that sent Him and was in Him, which was the Spirit,—that nature could not be perfected unless endowed with sin-destroying power. The Incarnation did not become perfect in its power until Christ could give the Spirit to dwell in men. He drew His breath as a child in the fear of the Lord and in the spirit of love, and was potentially endowed with all redeeming powers. The state which corresponds to this in man is regeneration. "We are regenerated of the same Spirit as Christ was in the Incarnation born. By the same Spirit we attain remission of sins, as Christ was made that He had no sin."[1] The Spirit in Jesus was absolutely dominant over the flesh at every step from the first, and as He grew to manhood the Spirit ruled through the freedom of will.

The Incarnation is a manifestation of Christ in a state of emptiness. Its fulness is the Spirit, who is the fulness in Christ that filleth all. He who was rich became poor, and in our nature felt its aching void, which in Him meant a longing and a passion to save, that through His poverty men might be made rich. There was no merit in our nature and no power to redeem itself; but now the Holy One, the Son, having assumed our nature, has thereby become our salvation, to bring us also into a state of sonship which is not under law, but under grace. Christ laid hold of our nature in its degradation, and lifted it into perfect union with the Father in sonship. The nature in Jesus was sanctified in the union, "so that grace was co-existent, and in a manner co-natural with it."[2] "There was no merit before existence, and certainly there was no merit in the nature itself but the merit of wrath."[3] All the operations of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ were for the purpose of His mission, in which was included the mission of the Spirit Himself. The Spirit dwelling in Jesus Christ had a threefold mode of operation. He communicated the divine, in fellowship, to the human, the human to the divine, and both, in full accord, with no reserve on either side, to the Father.

Christ married our nature, and, among all created things, divine wisdom itself could find no other helpmeet for Him.

[1] Aug., *De Pred.*, 15. [2] Pearson. [3] Augustine.

This union must be other than that existing between created persons. Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul explains the one by the other, as type and antitype (Eph. v. 23-32). Christ left all and became united to our nature, which was from Him and prepared for Him. The higher visited the lower, seeking union, and as the words "flesh and bone" signify human nature as such, He so united our nature to Himself that the twain became one. The wife is from the husband, but it is the man who is said to leave father and mother; so, mystically, Christ leaves the Father,[1] and the mystery of the human relationship is taken to point out the mystery of salvation. His was the love that, when it married our nature, could win a responsive love by suffering, and, so winning its object, could make it worthy of Himself in eternal youth and eternal purity, "without spot or wrinkle," so as to present it to Himself glorious. His human nature was "separated from sinners, holy and undefiled." Sin was not of the essence of our nature, and so it was possible for holy love, in the Incarnation, to conquer its power.

As an act of grace, therefore, the birth of our Lord is without measure, for in it He gave Himself to our nature, thereby manifesting the full possibilities of humanity in such a degree that man may well stand in awe at the greatness of his own nature as it is revealed in Christ. He united it with the divine, making it a dwelling for His own eternal Person, and adorned it with His own Spirit and therefore with "the fulness of the Godhead bodily." When Christ became flesh the divine nature seemed lost during His infancy, and many heresies have sprung from the difficulties that attend the union. On the other hand, His humanity seems now to be lost in the divinity of His glorified state. Yet this is perfectly clear, that the Spirit in Christ in the flesh revealed Him as the Son of God to men, and the same Spirit, as the Spirit of the glorified Lord, invariably reveals Him as the Son of man. The divine nature has been so conceived as to cause Christ's life upon earth to appear unnatural, as if our Lord had not truly submitted to human conditions. As a Jew He was under the Mosaic law, and this in itself is as mysterious as His coming under the general conditions of the race or under law in general. Yet the whole must be in perfect harmony, having no elements, docetic or cryptic, apparent or hidden, to disturb the perfect harmony of the person. In the heavenly state, again, there is no unnatural ubiquity of body, whatever potency it may have by union and co-operation with the divine, and when such a doctrine is taught, it is in order to defend, for sacerdotal purposes, the teaching of a continued sacrifice of the Body upon earth. The Spirit in the person of Christ was a perfect bond of peace, imposing no strain upon the human, nor any reserve upon the divine. Our own persons, as constituted of body and soul, furnish the best analogy that we can have to conceive the union of the two natures in the Person of Christ.

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[1] "Christus patrem quasi reliquit" (Bengel).

As the revealing medium in Christ's Person, His humanity might be supposed to obstruct the manifestation of the divine nature, whereas, on the contrary, the human nature itself was originally created for revealing the divine, and at the Incarnation was furnished by the Spirit in an especial manner for that end. Each step the Son took in the flesh became a testimony to His divinity and to His essential unity with the Father. The events of His life were set in a human framework, and yet in soul and substance each was a revelation of the divine in Him. In the depth we find the height, and even when His life is shrouded in weakness, disgrace and death, the still heights with their undimmed glory are ever visible. Again, when revealed by the Spirit in His heavenly glory, He is seen by faith in the mirror of the Gospel narrative as a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, so that His majesty ever reveals Him as our nearest and dearest Brother. The medium of faith is the Gospel, and what it sees through the medium is the Lord in glory. In every revelation the two natures are together in unity. The Spirit added no new faculty to the personality, and this holds true also of the work of the Spirit in the regeneration of man.

The Spirit in Christ, searching the deep things of God and revealing Him to Himself, communicated to Him as Son of man the divine fulness, as the adornment of a simple peasant's life. The veil of flesh was the medium of a revelation by means of which the "unspeakable words" of heaven were translated into human form, to be understood of all men. The cloud-veil of glory under the old dispensation is represented as hiding God from Israel while it revealed Him. The flesh as a veil was a perfect means of manifestation to men, speaking, as it did, in human words and in human acts, and transforming the divine into a human form. The unapproachable brightness was really the true hiding-place of Deity, so that none could see Him. By the flesh it pleased the Lord to draw the blinds, and to put on a veil, which was capable of revealing the divine lineaments to perfection and of riveting upon itself the eye of the beholder in the sweet fellowship of faith, as man speaking to man. So intensely human was Christ that He could be "rejected of men." The visible form was man, the glory was that of the Only Begotten. Christ "apprehended" our nature fully in the Incarnation. On the ground of that apprehension, and after the measure of it, the Apostle Paul could press forward to apprehend Christ fully in body and spirit (Phil. iii. 12).

The words used to express the growth of Christ describe the process as perfectly normal. He grew in wisdom and in moral knowledge, and therefore in all intellectual powers. This growth was not an imperfection, but the very perfection of the state He had entered into. Every stage of growth was filled by the Spirit, so as to become the means of further growth, and Jesus never overstepped nor fell short of the Spirit so vouchsafed. The divine had taken the form of a servant, and had submitted itself to the slow pace of the human. Yet, just as man's reason plays upon all sensations given him by the senses, and transforms them to be his possession as a reasonable being, so the Spirit in Christ received from all, and wrought upon all, that divine impress of the Person of the Son by which He became, in manifestation, "God in the flesh."

Man retains his identity under all changes. The mystery of a permanent self in an ever-changing, progressive life, is seen in him. In Christ the eternal and the temporal meet and are in harmony, He being the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. A marked distinction appears in the growth in Luke ii. 40 as compared with ii. 52. As a babe He is called a "Holy thing"; as a child "He grew and waxed strong," and became full of wisdom, which implies the perfection of moral attributes, and the grace of God was upon Him. The process is described as passive, which is the natural condition of a child's growth. "The filling ever accompanied the growth, and, being filled, He grew to be filled more and more."[1] Grace was upon Him as the bloom of divine, unconscious beauty.

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[1] Godet, *in loc.*

At the age of twelve years the Jewish Child stepped from childhood to manhood, chose a profession, and became a disciple of the Law. Responsibilities and duties devolved upon Him. Jesus, at this transition age, went up to Jerusalem, and the sight of the Temple and its surroundings awakened within Him great thoughts which wrought a mighty change. What He was enabled Him to see in the light of the Spirit what was presented to Him. The mist cleared from the heights, and He saw clearly who He was. In this great self-consciousness He answered His mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" He had passed over into the conscious responsibility of His life, where the will determines the character. His will must henceforth become an active condition of His growth. The great "must" had resounded in His soul, and its sound ceased not to be heard. The word then used expresses this mode of growth. Jesus "advanced" in wisdom. He cut His way onward by conscious effort and will in obedience, and so pressed onwards in wisdom and stature, in grace with God, and therefore, in those silent years, in grace also with men. Scripture, and His daily experience by the Spirit of holiness, illuminated His path, and worked in Him the beauty of holiness in a sublime calm—the undisturbed stillness of faith.

In His life there was no asceticism. The lower impulses in man must surrender unconditionally, and in case they fortify themselves in any rightful power or member, they must be eradicated even at the cost of sacrificing what is valuable in itself, such as a hand or an eye. Insubordination must be quelled. In Jesus the growth in the liberty of the Spirit was perfectly normal. He saw nature in its formal beauty, and loved man's world because He loved man. Sin was there, and sorrow, "that the works of God should be made manifest" thereby.

Mary, as one favoured of grace, is referred to in her virgin capacity in Isaiah vii. 14, where the article with the word "virgin" emphasises the noun. It is not a young woman, but *the* young woman. Her connection with the Birth is given us in the Gospel narrative with the finest touches. In order that the Incarnation might be almighty redeeming grace, it was not necessary that Mary's nature should be sinless. An immaculate Mary would seem to make salvation needless, and, instead of a mystery of grace perceived by faith as true, presents a mystery incomprehensible to faith, and therefore absurd and worthless. She was the Eve who was the mother of the human life in the Son incarnate, so that out of her substance came the seed that should conquer sin.

Some men are apt to find fault with those who were near Christ on earth for their dulness. Others ascribe to them knowledge which they could not possibly possess. Though Mary knew the circumstances of the Birth, yet that did not enable her to see who and what Christ was, unless the Spirit revealed to her her own Son. She did not see Christ as He was afterwards seen of others. It is said that she "kept all in her heart" as a holy secret mystery which she could not understand. She kept it to await further light, as words once uttered and never to be forgotten. She felt, and properly felt, that they were to be kept secret, and that their beauty would be marred by divulging them. It was a mental conception over which a veil must be drawn until the hour of birth should come.

"Instances she must—simply recognise?
Oh! more than so—must with a learner's zeal
Make doubly prominent, twice emphasise
By added touches that reveal
The God in babe's disguise."[1]

As the mother of Jesus, Mary had difficulties which, beyond those common to man, arose out of her peculiar relationship, and tended to make it hard for her to see her Son as God's Son. What she knew fixed her mind mainly upon the earthly hopes of Israel. It is remarkable that she is not mentioned in the Gospel narrative as accompanying Jesus and His disciples. Her name occurs four times. At Cana she was moved by the Spirit to speak to her Son a greater word than she herself intended, and was reproved by Jesus as not being in the same state of mind as He was in at the marriage feast. Afterwards we find that she understood not His mission, for He who was before so obedient and submissive was now distant and separated from her. When she desired to speak with Him, Christ repudiated all demands of human relationship, pointing out that all relations of kinship had now become merged in those between Him and His disciples. She appears next at the foot of the Cross, where, in sorrow, she saw her earthly hopes vanishing. Then was fulfilled the prophecy of Simeon, who, with the Child in his arms, had blessed the parents, and had said to Mary: "This Child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel. Yea, and a sword shall pierce through thine own soul: that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke ii. 34, 35). The Child was to be the cause of a fall and a rising to many, and it was through the fall, as a destruction of their hopes, that the rising would come.

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[1] Browning, "James Lee's Wife," vi. 8,

Immediately and inseparably joined to this statement are the words addressed to Mary, to whom also that statement would be applicable. Through her own soul, or natural life, a sword would pierce as the sad death-blow to all her hopes. By this experience the thoughts of many hearts would be revealed in her case. At the Cross she died to her worldly self, and the thoughts that were treasured in her heart were then revealed. She had not been with the women that had ministered to Jesus during His ministry, but she was now a sorrowful mother at the foot of the Cross, where she fell in order to rise.

> "Simple? Why, this is the old woe of the world,—
> Tune, to whose rise and fall we live and die.
> Rise with it then! Rejoice that man is hurled
> From change to change unceasingly,
> His soul's wings never furled."[1]

We meet her again in the upper room with the disciples and certain women, and on her knees praying with them for the promise of the Father. At this point the veil of silence is drawn over her, and she is left on her knees, and we would fain think that she was in the upper room when the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples.

By the Incarnation humanity becomes the study of angels. It has conferred such a dignity upon our nature that all creatures enter the service of man as their choice way of serving the Lord, and all the shame of the race has been wiped away. Man is at the centre of things, and what happens to him concerns the whole kingdom of God.

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[1] Browning, "James Lee's Wife," vi. 14.

VI.

THE BAPTISM.

John i. 31-33.

BY the incarnation Jesus Christ assumed all the responsibilities of the race. He submitted Himself to all the ordinances of the Law during His life at Nazareth. At His baptism He surrendered Himself to its judgment and curse. By this act God's holy wrath was revealed and also appeased. In this act of self-sacrifice Jesus surrendered all that was human in Himself to the Spirit, thus bringing human nature into a new relation with the Spirit, so that by His life and death Christ could give the Holy Spirit personally to believers. Jesus had to die to the flesh in order to be quickened in the Spirit. Circumcision pointed to the promise of salvation given to the human race, and to Abraham in particular, who represented the promised "seed." The babe Jesus was circumcised, and He thereby received the rights conferred and the duties imposed upon human nature. In the baptism Jesus willingly submitted Himself to the Law, and the Father's words throw a great light upon the silent years of Sonship that had passed, and explain all that follows in His life and death. The Mosaic dispensation had cultivated a sense of sin and of judgment, teaching the holiness of Jehovah and the sinful condition of man. Jesus Himself was prepared for the baptism because of His holy love, which longed to become the means of taking away the sin of the world. The Holy Spirit dwelling in Him revealed to Jesus the need of the world, and created within Him a thirst for that blessing which would enable Him to supply the need, and now He heard the rustling of the Spirit's wings. Before His baptism He could not understand the nature of the gift of the Holy Spirit which He sought, as He understood it after He had received it. The reason was that the Holy Spirit operated in Jesus in the form of a prayer that He might receive from on high power to fulfil His office as Saviour. There was in Jesus a want, an aching void, that could not be satisfied except by the salvation of the world. But He could not save it without the Spirit, and so He longed to be clothed with His might. When He had been filled with the gifts of office, He was called by God, as Son of man, from among men, to the work of redemption : as a prophet, in utterance; as a priest, in suffering; and as a King to be the Saviour of men. The baptism, therefore, forms a great landmark in the life of Jesus. Before it He was under the conditions of the Old Dispensation; henceforth He is Himself the New Dispensation in its process of becoming among men.

Office belongs to man and not to God ; and " no man taketh the honour of office unto himself, but when he is called of God" (Heb. v. 4). So Christ glorified not Himself; but He who spake unto Him at the baptism, "Thou art My Son," also said, "Thou art a Priest for ever." What He was eternally as Son was the basis of what He became in office. To possess the truth is not the same as to testify to it, and the call to testify is conferred by the spirit of office. A distinction of the same kind is seen in the state of the disciples before and after Pentecost.

Before Pentecost the Spirit dwelt in them as the Spirit of inward truth. After Pentecost He manifested Himself in the gift of powerful utterance. Man's insight into the depth of judgment and grace in repentance and forgiveness, which are the gifts of the Spirit, is analogous to the effect of the baptism upon Jesus. The baptism was Christ's Pentecost when the Spirit glorified the Son of man. Men saw His glory, and from that hour the anthem has been sung on earth, " Worthy art Thou."

Some of the Fathers held that Christ needed not the Spirit, but that the Spirit needed the Son, in order that His gifts might be revealed to men. The Spirit could not dwell in men except by first dwelling in Christ, who as the Son of man, who was also the Son of God, alone could receive Him. Jesus, before the baptism, was hidden amongst men, waiting for the call in submissive reverence. The difference between His state, before and after the baptism, was that between *being* and *being in power*.

John the Baptist was unique among prophets, for he announced the passing away of the Old Dispensation, as well as the necessity of an inward ethical change, as the primary condition of receiving the Spirit of the new. He was sent before the Lord, and his commission was to baptise with a baptism which implied a confession of sin, and to call upon the nation to die to its old ordinances and hopes, and, by the baptism of Christ, to reveal the Messiah to Israel. His family lived in the hilly barren south. As his father was a priest, he was brought up in the atmosphere of the Temple service with its lustrations. He had received the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Messianic kingdom, so that he was prepared, judging from the nature of his message, to enter the kingdom, but remained out of it on account of the nature of his office. He was the prophet of the desert, and from its barrenness he obtained his emblems of judgment. All who came to him had to enter a land that was accursed. He could see Jordan, "the descender," or "the river of judgment," which, passing through a variety of scenes analogous to human life, flowed to a depth that was lower than the sea, and was there lost. In Christian language its name is synonymous with death. The Dead Sea also was a symbol of Gehenna, whose smoke ascends for ever. Baptism in Jordan was a baptism of judgment. Those who confessed that their sins were deserving of wrath were promised remission by God's free grace and participation in the Messianic kingdom. As he meditated upon the sin of his people with a foreboding of wrath, John saw a vision. The old prophetic voice of the Spirit spoke within him, telling him that the Messiah was standing among the people, and commanding him to baptise with water all who confessed their guilt and desired to flee from the impending judgment. He saw the kingdom and the wrath coming. All Jewish privileges at once withered away, and all shelter under Abrahamic descent vanished like Jonah's gourd. He saw that God would reject Israel unless they were baptised with the Spirit, and of stones, the products of the desert, children might be raised unto Abraham. He saw the axe laid at the root of the pleasant trees of their institutions, he saw the threshing-floor and the fan, he saw the ingathering of the grain and the chaff burning with a fire that no one would or could quench. He cried out with an agonised and piercing voice, which reverberated among the rocks, and his voice rang through Israel, rousing the attention of all. He came upon the nation like a fiery blast of the desert, and effected a remarkable reformation of morals among the people. He was a light shining and burning until he burnt himself out. A Nazarite born, he carried asceticism to an extreme degree, and was in appearance, in dress and in food, a picture of woe and contrition. He performed no miracle, for the Messiah and the Holy Spirit, whom he announced, were the mighty powers that were to seal his prophecy. His mission was a confession of impotence, and he confessed that he himself was nothing but a voice. He had no power and no hope in himself or in the Law which he represented, and his cry ever was, "I am not He." Yet at the door he saw the mightiest of the mighty, who was to baptise the people with the Holy Spirit and with fiery judgment, and who could separate the wheat from the chaff.

He applied to himself the prophecy which had spoken of a "voice" calling in the wilderness—the emblem of judgment—upon all to prepare the way of the Lord (Isa. xl. 1-9). It cried, "Behold, your God!" He was coming through the desert to save, and what flesh could not see and live, all flesh through him was to see the glory of the Lord. It cried, "exalt the valleys and make low the hills, and prepare the spiritual way of the Lord, who has 'His highways in the heart.'" The voice again said, "Cry!" He enquired, "What?" "All flesh is as grass." His coming was as the simoom of the desert, which withers and blasts. And yet where the Spirit was already as an inward power of repentance and confession of guilt, there the Holy Spirit could refresh and quicken. The Baptist proclaimed that this judgment of fire would be universal, either burning or purifying. The people flocked to John to be baptised, confessing their sins. Even the ecclesiastical and political leaders came, and soon, by their numbers, corrupted his Church of the desert, till he denounced them as "the offspring of vipers," and longed for the fan.

Jesus heard the voice of John, and heard the Father's call. Leaving Nazareth, He came to be baptised with the baptism of sin and death and to enter the door of the Spirit. Christian baptism Jesus could not undergo. But this baptism, with the evangelising that accompanied it, was His ordination service to the atoning ministry. As all who came to John confessed their sin, a conversation with John is implied, previous to baptism, concerning the nature and the desert of sin. Jesus opened the eyes of John to see the sin of the whole world as well as that of Israel, and the universal need of the Spirit and of fleeing from the wrath to come. The prophet of sin stood in awe before a higher purity, which pierced into the depth of the nature of sin—a purity that awakened a sense of sin and also evinced a divine compassion towards sinners corresponding to the sin. John recognised his Master. Luther well says that John "scented the Spirit," and he recognised that he had now met with One who stood on a higher plane than himself. John says afterwards that he knew Him not, and it is immaterial whether or not he was acquainted with Jesus before. None knew, or could know, who and what He was until the Spirit revealed Him. The baptism, as the symbol of death, and the descent of the Holy Spirit were the appointed means of manifesting Him.

John shrank from performing the rite upon Jesus, and confessed his own need to be baptised by Him. How the pure could occupy the position of a sinner passed his comprehension. He was, indeed, the first to grapple with the difficulty which has been felt by many since his day. Jesus solved the difficulty for all time by saying, "Suffer it now." This was the duty of the hour, and on the part of John it had nothing to do with the permanent relation of moral superiority of one over the other. For the present the servant is, by reason of his office, apparently higher than his Master, and it was fitting that a man who was both priest and prophet should perform the rite: "For thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." John represented the Law and the Prophets, who had witnessed to Christ, and the demands of the Law had to be satisfied, and the consecration of divine redeeming love had to be performed by a representative of the Old Dispensation. "All righteousness"—perfect righteousness—is the union of judgment and redeeming love, which the Prophets foretold and the Law foreshadowed. In the consecration of Christ the Old Testament ended its mission, and brought about "all righteousness" as the righteousness of God for sinners, the righteousness by which God is Himself just, and the justifier of him that is of faith (Rom. iii. 26), the righteousness which is sonship.

Jesus was conscious of His fellowship with men. In order to be baptised by the Spirit, He cast in His lot with those who confessed that sin deserved wrath. He took their sin, with its shame and sorrow, upon His own heart, as He had become one with the race, and confessed that all previous gifts to men were inadequate to save. Jesus and John both went down to the river of death, and Jesus was baptised. Coming up straightway, as in haste, He prayed that the Holy Spirit might be given Him in the fulness of power, to reveal, as a Prophet, the truth that lay in His Person, to fill His heart, as a Priest, with the consecration of obedience unto death, and to confer upon Him kingly majesty. As He prayed, heaven opened to His human eyes. The Spirit, whole and not divided, was seen to descend upon Him in the form of a dove, and to abide upon Him. A voice was heard saying, "Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The event was an objective fact objectively beheld. Heaven opened, and the Son of man was henceforth in heaven. The Spirit within Christ had offered earth in sonship to heaven, and heaven, in answer, gave to the Son the Holy Spirit, who made heaven and earth one. This was the first glorification of Christ on earth. The Spirit gave Him in our nature a perfect fellowship with the Father, which suffered no interruption until the wrath-cloud on the Cross intervened for a time, and was finally dissolved by suffering love. By the opening of heaven the Son of man saw the divine realities, and the human in Him was glorified, so that the darkness of the flesh was overcome. To soul and body after the manner of each —to His Person in the unity of the two natures—heaven was opened. This was the first official step in redemption, and in it the Father, Son and Spirit co-operated.

The Spirit descended upon the Messiah in the form of a dove, which was an emblem of innocence, purity and peace, and symbolised the gentle, the meek and the lowly in heart. In Alexandrian thought the dove signified wisdom. John saw it as the promised sign. To Jesus it was a sign that full harmony of heaven and earth was to be wrought in Him, bespeaking peace on earth. The windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up in one infinite outpouring of the personal Spirit, so that sinless holiness received an illumination in power. John had described the Spirit as "fire," the purifying element, whose power to dissolve and to penetrate enables the true metal to appear more clearly in its own unalloyed beauty. The Spirit dissolves the closest ties between sin and man's nature, and spiritual affinities and antipathies have their due effect. What is dross must be destroyed by "unquenchable fire," and the purified object can then be treasured for use. As fire, the Spirit of Christ divides the world, becoming the instrument of perfection in blessing, and of final rejection in judgment. For this baptism of fire Jesus prayed, "What will I, if it is already kindled" (Luke xii. 49). In the Son of man, also, the antagonism between the natural and the spiritual had to be removed—at first morally, by the submission of flesh to spirit, and afterwards physically, in the glory of His resurrected life. The voice testified to John that Jesus was by nature divine, for the promise at the Annunciation that He should be called the Son of the Most High was now fulfilled. Sonship expresses sovereignty, for which the Spirit endowed Him with power, and this endowment is called a "begetting," a word applicable whenever some great change reveals the Sonship.[1] On entering upon His ministry at the baptism Jesus was called Son. By naming Him Son, the Father in complacency approved of Him now and sealed Him for His great work (John vi. 27).

"Where one heard noise, and one saw flame,
I only knew he named my name."[2]

"Beloved" describes Christ as loving the Father and the world, for which reason He was loved by the Father (John x. 17); and the word invariably signifies this self-sacrificing love. The voice on a subsequent occasion (John xii. 28) filled Jesus with strength when His soul was troubled, when He, the "Beloved," submitted to death in order that He might draw all, Gentiles and Jews, to Himself. The words were spoken also on the Mount of Transfiguration, when the Spirit was given to our Lord in such a bodily manner as to represent the glory of His resurrection, which changed the body of His humiliation and crowned Him with honour and glory.

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[1] Luke iii. 22, *Westcott and Hort*, marginal reading.

[2] Browning, *Christmas Eve.*

Christ, who had hitherto been like a sealed book, was now, as it were, opened by the revelation of the Spirit, who illuminated His Person as the true Light of men. The Spirit in Christ gave Him an infinite impulse to move and act. Strength belonged to Christ essentially; the strength now became might in movement. The awakening of the Person of the Son of man by a divine impulse was conditioned, as is the case with all men, by His humanity. Under this condition the consciousness of great gifts and of the capacity of accomplishing mighty things brought with it the contingency of temptation and trial, according to the moral necessity of our nature. Human nature had its part in determining the gift, for that nature had ever to be held in restraint, there being a natural way of using the gift over against the spiritual. The determination of the gift had to be in perfect freedom, and Christ's human will was to suffer no constraint. There arose before Him a vision of office which was infinite in greatness and responsibility, and in which He saw that flesh, in all its power, must be destroyed, and every cherished desire belonging to it must be voluntarily given up. Herein lay the possibility and the necessity of a mighty conflict. The Spirit purified Him by the consecration of all that was human in His Person to spiritual ends, making even His death the means by which He entered on a life in glory. Jesus became conscious of His ability to benefit all men by His endowment of almighty power. As Son of man He became conscious of a divine impulse of self-sacrifice, reaching onward even to death. He saw the kingdom of God established on earth, and within Him rose the kingly spirit of a universal dominion. The nature of His call to office ran counter to the flesh, and the question at once arose, What use will Jesus make of the gift? Along what path will He realise it—that of self, or that of service?

In order to enable Christ to possess and exercise the full power of Sonship in the spirit of freedom, the Holy Spirit "led" Him up from Jordan to the wilderness. This action of the Spirit is elsewhere described as a constraining inward power, the Spirit "driving Him," as if Jesus were overwhelmed with awe at the height and the depth of His own greatness. In receiving the Spirit, Jesus was passive, and His human will had to accept the call in the divine form in which it was presented to Him. He, in His own spirit also, desired to retire from men, and was led to the region of barrenness and the shadow of death, whence He would come forth, with "the spirit of the prophet subject to the prophet" (1 Cor. xiv. 32), in perfect self-mastery and peace. It behoved Him who had so endowed Jesus to show Him all the wiles of Satan, and to give Him a conquest over sin on the threshold of His ministry. Such a temptation meets all men who are endowed with any gifts, and the greater the gift the more intense is the temptation. It was incomparably stronger in Jesus than in a sinful man. On the one hand, the gifts were infinitely greater; on the other, the strength of temptation is measured by the power of resistance. By the sinfully weak temptation is scarcely felt. The holy feel it more strongly, even to such an extent that the personality of evil forces itself upon the consciousness. It is the rock that calls forth the roar of the storm, and not the fern that is whirled away by it. He, who was tempted without sin, measured once for all the strength of temptation (Heb. iv. 15).

The occasion of the temptation lay in the nature of the chrism which Jesus had received, and which gave Him His consciousness of divine greatness. Satan attacked man in Eden through his ideal and by the knowledge of what he was destined to be. Christ also was tempted because of what was His as a Son. It was by the Son of man that the enemy had to be withstood. Standing as our representative, He can use no weapons for the conflict except such as are human, and they were those which are granted to prayer, and are available for all believers. The sword of the Spirit, the written word, was the weapon in the hand of Christ that pierced through the temptation and revealed to the eye of all the nature of sin. The hateful features of Satan were disclosed under the fair and alluring forms of the temptation. The Son of man, laying aside all divine privileges, met the enemy and laid him low, and exposed his inmost nature to the light.

The "forty days and forty nights" is a measure of time which signifies in Scripture a period of trial preparatory to some great change. Satan was permitted to tempt Jesus when He was worn out with hunger in the desert. The temptations appear vulgar to us, because the divine purity of Jesus reveals their essential vulgarity. Satan tempted Jesus, as he tempted man, by the finest method that cunning could contrive. He laid hold of the good, insinuating that its lawfulness made it needless that it should be lawfully obtained and used (1 Tim. i. 8). So Satan presented the visions of the Spirit in the finest embroidery of flesh. When men see these very objects apart from the light that Christ throws upon them, they are praised and honoured as the greatest benefits that are conferred upon men. Earthly welfare, that of the soul as well as that of the body, without salvation from sin, has been, and is, frequently extolled as the highest good. To turn the stones of the desert into bread, to make what was under a divine curse minister to man's material need, to use the divine Word within Him to supply the hunger of His own flesh, this surely could not be wrong? To lay stress upon the earthly value of providential gifts, rather than upon trust in God, is common enough, and is even dinned into our ears as a duty. With a Scripture quotation as a sword of the Spirit, Jesus pierced the iniquity of the tempter, saying that God's Word is man's life, and that trustful obedience is the way to supply every need.

The self-sacrificing spirit in Christ met the obligatory dangers of life, and became victorious. By the unlawful display of His power, and by needlessly challenging divine assistance, He could have laid His hand upon the religious instinct in men and commanded their worship. This would have been to court danger rashly,—conduct which would not yield the moral joy that is to be gained by obedience to duty. The Temple was the spiritual sphere of this temptation, and religious enthusiasm was to be its reward. With a word of Scripture Jesus laid bare the desire to obtain religious influence by such means, showing it to be tempting God.

Finally, He was promised universal sway over all the kingdoms of the world if He would bow down to power severed from righteousness. This was the Jewish notion of a universal earthly kingdom, and it is a vision that others have seen presenting great possibilities of good. With a word Jesus thrust the enemy back, and, trusting in God, acknowledged Him to be the sole object of worship and of service. Universal kingship has been given to Christ because He, as a servant, was obedient unto death. Thus the lust of the flesh or of the natural man, the lust of the eyes or the religious imagination of the flesh in spiritual matters, and the vainglory of life are conquered by faith in God (1 John ii. 16).

Returning from the desert, with the marks of the conflict chiselled upon His visage, and with a calm of conquest in His heart, He passed by where John stood with his disciples. Moved by the Holy Spirit, John cried out, "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" The sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb was a rite that contained in itself the whole sacrificial system, and the universal priesthood of Israel was shown in the Passover. John saw Christ as God's Paschal Lamb, bearing the sin, not of Israel only, but also of the whole world. His disciples heard him, and followed Jesus. He turned and asked what they sought. They answered, "Where abidest Thou?" Jesus said, "Come, and ye shall see," which is salvation in two words. The bridegroom found the bride.

Soon afterwards He came to Nazareth, and, entering the synagogue, stood up to read. The book opened at the proclamation of the year of Jubilee in Isaiah lxi., and our Lord read His own proclamation: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke iv. 18, 19).

VII.

REGENERATION.

John iii. 1-26.

(*a*) The Need of a New Birth (vers. 1-6).

THE narrative of chapter iii., as far as verse 21, records a conversation between our Lord and Nicodemus in which the need, the agent and the substance of regeneration are presented to us. The agent is the Spirit, and the substance is Christ as Prophet, Priest and King. The regenerate life is shown to be the work of the Trinity, and to be conclusive evidence of the doctrine. All is of the Father, who, by His Spirit, draws men to Christ, and makes all things to work together for the great issue at stake. "The upward course of the knowledge of God begins from the one Spirit, through the one Son, to the one Father. For, receiving the gift, we first meet Him who distributeth the gift, then we apprehend Him who sent Him, and so we lift our thoughts to the first fountain of all—the Father." [1] The new life is also shown to be the principle which divides the world, or its judgment.

Nicodemus, an honest and honourable ruler of the Jews, was given by the Father to Christ, with a view to set forth the divine nature of regeneration. Had the doctrine been taught to an outcast from Jewish society,

[1] Basil, iii. 17.

or to an openly immoral character, the process of regeneration would have been liable to be taken for a mere moral reformation, and not a radical and spiritual change of character.

The Holy Spirit, dwelling in Christ as the Spirit of revelation, enabled Him to preach the word of the kingdom, which was Himself. The word was accompanied by "manifold powers and gifts of the Holy Spirit" (Heb. ii. 4), attesting it and symbolising it in acts.

Taking account of man's salvability and of the fact that the word was adapted to man in his sinful condition, Jesus sowed the seed not knowing whether this or that grain would prosper, but resting with implicit trust upon the Father, the tiller of the ground, who by the Spirit had also prepared the soil. After this preparation the soil was capable of bringing forth of itself, and the Sower had but to wait in patience until the fruit "yielded itself." Then "straightway, he putteth forth the sickle" (Mark iv. 29). In every act of obedience to the truth, fruit is born, or yields itself, and this in its turn becomes a sowing to the Spirit. This bringing forth fruit is characteristic of each stage in the Christian growth. It presents itself repeatedly step by step, and "grace for grace," till the full and final harvest. In the case of Nicodemus the seed bore fruit when he visited Jesus. In the case of the Samaritans the seed brought forth fruit at once, ready for the sickle and white to the harvest, "when reaper and sower rejoice together." Because of the vastness of the kingdom, the sowing becomes a long-continued process, and the reaping often lies hidden in the far future. Jesus knew that all the Father had given Him would come unto Him, "and," said He, "him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." Many had seen the miracles and heard the words, but came not to

Jesus. Nicodemus came furtively, by night. But he was playing a part greater than he knew when he proved himself superior to the prejudices of his class, and thereby surmounted a great obstacle in the way of man's salvation. Jesus had a mysterious power, which drew him so irresistibly, that he could not sleep that night without going to Him. He was compelled to acknowledge Him a divinely accredited Teacher, and he had to believe that this Man was, at any rate, greater than any ordinary man. There is a vagueness about his confession, as of one blindly groping for the way. Some think that Jesus cut his utterance short, but they do not know how gently Jesus "leads those that are with young." The ruler said all that he honestly could say, and Jesus, seeing what was not yet visible, responded to the inner need of the man by the great and startling statement that, in order to see the kingdom, man must be born from above. Around this definite pronouncement the man's indefinite faith could entwine itself, and, laying hold upon it, he might come to know what he himself was, and also who and what Jesus was.

The Spirit of God, who draws men to Christ, uses whatever means are adapted to awaken the mind, conscience and the heart, in accordance with man's moral and rational nature. Every disposition and every faculty are pressed into the service of the Spirit, who draws by human cords. He produces a hearing in the ear, and a seeing in the eye, and an attitude of attention in the man generally, so as to engender in him a disposition to receive what is offered. When the reception of the truth involves sacrificing what is dear to the flesh, a struggle ensues. In every instance of faith there lies a possibility of growth. The Spirit of God immanent in man is so intertwined with his natural powers that man does not detect the influence of another personality unless he finds it in the nature of the spiritual light which he possesses, which is nothing else than the illumination of the Spirit, the ultimate source of all goodness in our nature. The shadow of God is light, said Plato, and this shadow is cast upon darkness, and so affects man's inner nature that the darkness does not overcome the light (John i. 5). The mightiest and most universal powers in nature are silent forces, hardly cognisable when operating most powerfully. The mightiest powers operating in man are often those which he cannot easily detect; nor is it always safe to measure the intrinsic importance of the experience by the strength of the power experienced. The mighty wind that rends the rocks, the earthquake that shakes the world, the destructive force of the lightning, may be experienced, and "yet the Lord may not be in them." Then there comes a voice as a "sound of gentle stillness," whispering, "What doest thou here?" and this may have God's authority in it.

The ruler gravitated towards Jesus, knowing not what made such a difference between Him and others. In man's nature below consciousness there lie extensive stores which may issue forth in great power. In the throng of objects that are daily presented to him by the senses, as flotsam on the torrent of life, there may be ingredients which, leavening silently, find affinities and send rootlets into the depths of man's soul, to work a mighty change in the whole man so imperceptibly as to be known only by the results which follow. The persuasive agency of the Spirit is so adapted to the disposition affected by it as to seem normal. Yet when a man looks back upon it from a higher stage of growth, he confesses that it was not of himself, but that another mightier than he was present with him. There is in all men an incompleteness that looks for its completion to something beyond itself. It is most wonderful that wherever in nature one thing exists, something else that bears a relation to it appears on the scene, as by some power of attraction. If a devout eunuch goes his way, reading and understanding not, some Philip is seen drawing near. Things that are akin find each other as if by instinct, and where there is a little earth ready for the heavenly seed, the seed will come, and the earth will soon be green.

When the source of this attraction is sought for in man, it is found in some affection of the soul that is in close alliance with a sense of sin in one or other of its various aspects. When man thinks that his salvation comes from what is excellent in him, he deceives himself. This blessed impulse starts in weakness and impotence, and springs from some humble and despised Nazareth in man, whence he would not expect any good to appear. It enters along the line of a bruised heart, a dissatisfaction with self and the world, and a longing for better things, and it prepares the way of the Lord. After the pattern of the Incarnation, the birthplace of what is highest in man is to be found in what is lowest; and when the new man is born, he shall be found "wrapt in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger." This also shall be called "a holy thing, and a child of God."

Providential government is used by the Spirit of God to draw all men to Christ. He does this, on the one hand, by His universal guidance of all things, which He makes subservient to the coming of the kingdom of God; and, on the other hand, by placing individuals, as well as races and nations, in the most advantageous conditions for their advancement and spiritual elevation. He determines the seasons and the bounds of their habitations "that they may seek God, if haply, groping after Him in darkness, they may find Him." He is not far from each of His blind children who seek Him thus. Each man is situated in the time and place best fitted by unerring wisdom for leading him to seek after God. God calls him by His providence and by man's own moral, physical and social errors. The disappointing mirage of life, the deceptive rainbows of beautiful colours, which in the end are but showers of tears, all help in the work. Salvation, therefore, when it comes, will be found to bear a relation not only to what man essentially is, but also to all his surroundings, good and evil. The Spirit in the wheels of Providence harmonises all movements and countermovements into one undeviating line of progress. They often appear to go backward, yet the retrogression is like that of the planets, a continuous progress when seen from the centre.

Nicodemus came for instruction, and was referred for it to life, to his own real need, and to the necessary ground of all true knowledge: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Man" is natural man; and man, even at his best, including all his faculties and capacities of soul and body, in the unity of personality, must undergo an essential change. This change, being in all cases radical and thorough, admits of no degrees, although, in the subsequent operations of the Spirit, there will be degrees, determined by man's attitude of faithfulness or unfaithfulness to his new status.

The whole argument proves that the words "born again" ought to be translated "born from above." In verse 30 the phrase has this meaning beyond a doubt. The idea of repetition here is not applicable to the case, but the local sense of the words, describing the heavenly source, gives a necessary intimation of their meaning.

The phrase "second time" used by Nicodemus shows how his mind is groping to apprehend the thought presented to him and to find the light. The local sense, "from above," is more helpful even than the causative one, "from God," would have been. The word "born" is usually translated "begotten," which is more pertinent, as signifying the endowing of a thing with an active progressive life-energy, similar in nature to the life of the parent stock. This vital power given in regeneration involves the right to become a child of God (John i. 12).

The word "kingdom" is used by John here only. In the other gospels it is the usual expression for God's saving purpose. John expresses the same thought in terms of life that signify sonship: for the Son is the Kingdom; and sonship, as the result of regeneration, inherits it. This life of sonship differs essentially from morality both in nature and in degree, because it begins where works were intended to end; while, by a spiritual transformation effected by grace, with a single leap as it were, it oversteps an infinite distance. Works cannot produce life. To say so were to substitute the effect for the cause. All man's acts are less than himself, so that they cannot change his nature, because man is neither his own creation nor his own life-giver. Morality is formal, and cannot produce life; whereas life, wherever it acts, produces its own mode of manifestation. Beautiful as many moral characters are, yet, like the youth whom Jesus looked upon and loved, they fall short of the standard. As that youth, though loved, was excluded, so there stands a barrier between these men and the kingdom which they cannot overstep. When such characters are seen, Abraham's cry rises to the lips: "Would that Ishmael lived before thee!" Yet it could not be.

Self must be destroyed in order that the kingdom may be seen. This destruction of self in man implies two things: first, a state of mind that is not conscious of any desert except that of wrath; secondly, one in which a man can receive a gift while acknowledging that he is not worthy of it, and never can be. This twofold attitude of mind a natural man can never assume; for while he lives unto self he will cling to some sense of merit, and will even transform his demerit and poverty into a claim, in order to attain his end. Like the prodigal son, men claim their portion, to be used independently of the filial relationship, and, when they begin to be in want, would fain satisfy their need with the husks of heathendom, fit food for swine, wherein there is no grain. As soon as the prodigal came to himself, he found his true self, and the vision of his father's house rose before him. He then disclaimed all the rights of sonship, and asked for the position of a servant. But once brought into that condition of mind, he presently received the blessings of sonship. The elder brother was selfish in a more insidious way. Complaining that he had never received anything to enjoy independently of his filial relationship, he showed clearly that he had never realised his sonship in the freedom of joy. Children can receive gifts only in virtue of their relationship, and not for any service rendered; and they, and such as they, are already ripe for the kingdom. Sonship is the highest gift.

The thought of this caused our Lord, on one occasion, to rejoice in the Holy Spirit, and to give thanks "that the Father had hidden these things from the wise, and had revealed them to babes." In these words He declared that kinship of life is the basis of the kingdom (Luke x. 21). For "all things," said He, "have been delivered unto Me of the Father," being comprised in the one great gift of the Spirit: "and no one knoweth who the Son is, save the Father; and who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." Repentance is an absolute condition imposed upon all, for it is the sense of sin that accounts to man for the incarnation of the Son. Looking up to the divine heights of sonship, men recognise them as once their own, and the consciousness of a great fall steals over their souls. Through the new life man knows God as the Father, even as his own Father. To know God demands moral conditions of righteousness and grace, and while there is a relation between God and all His creatures, this relationship turns upon kinship of life.

The child-nature sees the kingdom as a vision of God. The old-world kingdoms were the reflection of the idea of God that prevailed among the nations. The god was the kingdom. When the nation ceased to exist as a kingdom, its god or gods were dead. The virtues and the life-power of the state formed a community of life between a people and its god; and the ritual of the service was a life-fellowship with him. This conception was exemplified in Israel, and its impress was stamped upon their national life. Christ exalts the idea, and realises it in His kingdom by conferring a divine life, which affects the whole man, and draws him into kinship with Himself. The kingdom is already seen in Him, and is a present reality; yet it is still coming, and will continue to come, until it fills all the needs of life in its final consummation. Seen in its own ineffable perfection, the kingdom is seen to be one indivisible whole. But there is comprised in it an infinite fulness of variety, for "in the continent of truth there may be veins and lines, but no separation."[1] When seen, it becomes the inheritance of the beholder. Abraham, when he saw it, realised it as his "native land" (Heb. xi. 14).

The word used to express a state of receptivity, without a sense of merit, is "worthy" in its primary signification of "congruous" or "befitting." All preparatory grace in the natural man, as well as all goodness conferred by the Holy Spirit, produces worthiness. Worthiness is receptivity for a higher good, which, being a free gift of the Spirit, has no merit attaching to it. Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, taught the disciples to seek the "worthy"—that is, those who possessed the capacity of receiving their gifts, and who could appreciate them at their true value—as they would seek pearls (Matt. vii. 6-12). The same law is applicable to prayer, in which there is essentially no merit, but which shows a capacity for receiving. Therefore, "Ask, and it shall be given you." Jesus compares this state of receptivity to the relation of a son to his father. If a son asks a father for a necessary gift, and his confidence is rewarded, "How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!" (Luke xi. 13). Those who are worthy are described as "ordained"—that is, ranked as having their faces towards salvation, waiting for the call to enter in—while those who refuse, "judge themselves unworthy of eternal life" (Acts xiii. 46).

Every life has its susceptibility to the objects of its own proper sphere. The life of regeneration is from above, and therefore has its objects among the things that are above, while its activity, form and organisation are placed in things visible. Man's death to spiritual things is positive, and not merely negative. He hears a voice, and is conscious of his responsibility to obey, while yet he cannot obey, because his regulative faculty has been paralysed. Every age has abounded in teachers who proclaim that it is possible for man to rise by his own power to heavenly places, but "He that will fly without wings must fly in his dreams; and till he wakes will not find out that to fly in a dream is but to dream of flying."[1] To meet the case of man, the nature of the life brought to bear upon him must be so unique as to be a power to quicken the dead, and not merely a power to create life. Jesus claims that such a life was given to Him as the Son. In order to confer this life He came to seek man, making His way through sin and condemnation, and by the Spirit He saves him.

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[1] Bacon.

As there must be a living affinity with the objects perceived before we can see, so an objective kingdom of God must be subjectively realised before it can be experienced. This dualism of thought is a fundamental test of reality, to which the combination of subjective and objective is essential. The new life is analogous to natural life, in that it has a sensitiveness to the world to which it belongs. That world is its spiritual kingdom, in which it finds sustenance, growth and self-realisation, and in which it goes in and out and finds pasture.

Each type of life has an infinite variety, but each maintains its own proper character in all its variations. As this is a new life in man, who already exists as a living creature, he is born again in his entirety and in every capacity of his complex being. By the new life he sees not only the heavenly kingdom, but also the same objects as he saw before, but he sees them now suffused with new light. It is a change in the nature of his vision which changes the aspect of all things, so that now a new heaven and a new earth are presented to his view. A great reversal of judgment occurs—the last becoming first, and the first last, so that things appear other to the spiritual eye than they did to the natural. The prophet Ezekiel (viii. 8-10) gives a vivid description of the difference between carnal and spiritual sight when he tells us how he was enabled by the Spirit to see the true nature of the worship of Israel. Directed by the Spirit, he saw a hole in the wall of the Temple, and when commanded to dig in the wall, behold, there was a door! Going in by a way secretly revealed by the Spirit, he saw and described the abominations that Israel did in secret—all the forms of creeping things and beasts in which the worshippers, being carnal, delighted.

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[1] Coleridge, *Aids*, p. 126.

The life itself is supernatural, but its operations are natural, so that man's identity is the same before and after the change. The new life is intensely human, so human that by it man comes to his own. It is a miracle of grace gently wrought in man where such a wonder was least to be expected. It cuts off nothing that is human, while it reveals its presence by certain unfailing signs. Other attractions and antipathies, desires, hopes, and fears spring up. What was humanly good before, now becomes better; while the same acts are done from higher motives. Divine realities, faint before, now become vivid objects of love, ends to be striven after, and a joy in the attainment.

After the manner of all life, this new life begins unconsciously, and out of it issues the power which rules in every faculty after its kind. Of the Spirit Himself man is not cognisant; and the life, like every life, is only seen where and when it acts. It is a spiritual, saving life in every faculty. Its material is the Person of the Son, in whom the Spirit operates, so that it is in its nature intensely personal, and proportionately exalts man's personality. Taking of the life of the Son, the Spirit imparts it to man's reason in the form of intuition, to the conscience in the form of law, to the intellect in the form of knowledge, and to the will in the form of power by which the body becomes a servant to carry out its behests. The difficulty connected with each faculty is neither greater nor less in the heavenly life than in the natural, for the faculties remain simply what they were before. The life pervades all, is salvation in all, and the man lives by it. He who experiences the life never attributes it to his own powers, but acknowledges that it is the operation of another, and gives the praise to God.

In conscience this life judges, and is not judged by any one, for the Spirit of judgment is the voice of the Lord of conscience. All the demands of conscience suggest a person who is a "Thou" to the "I" of man. He commands, and the believer's eye is fixed upon his divine Lord. The power of conscience varies greatly in men; yet once give it light from the Lord, and it will retain it, and the voice once heard will not be forgotten. It is a prophet that speaks the truth, a kingly power that commands, and a priest that pronounces his blessing or his curse.

In reason and intellect this life is intuition and knowledge. It has been said "that there is nothing in intellect but what was before in sense," and to this it has been answered, "except the intellect itself." Reason is the perceiving faculty, which gives the eye for the vision. The increase of outward evidence without life will not produce conviction (Luke xvi. 31). Reason is contemplative, and knowledge issues from the experience of life. Reason and intelligence are the measure of man's responsibility, and they also supply the motives which influence the will. The Spirit is the spiritual truth which operates in these faculties by vision and understanding.

In the affections also this life operates to the same end, for to know a person one must love him. Every offence against a person produces a misrepresentation of his character which darkens the heart of the wrongdoer, so that the person has " no form or comeliness." The moral power of this love is based on repentance and forgiveness. Prayer is a personal appeal to the person offended, a sorrowing in his sorrow, on account of the offence. In forgiveness the offended party condescends to sympathise with the repentant offender, the reason for this sympathy being in the offended party himself. God so loved that He knew men thoroughly. The Spirit, who is Love, sheds abroad God's love in the heart. The regenerate love God, and thereby know Him, and prayer to Him is the voice of their love.

The freedom of the will is no hindrance to the new life. The freedom of man is not the same as the freedom of the will. There is a territory where will is not operative, though it belongs to the life of which will is a function. The will may repress or strengthen, but to repress is not to crush, and to check is not to destroy. It cannot command even the conscious life wholly. There are titanic forces in man which will not be ruled, and here nature is mightier than the will. Will guards the gates, watching the going out and the coming in. The deep recesses of the soul are not amenable to its bidding. By the new life the will is gently drawn with human means; without violence, as it needs must be, because where there is compulsion there is no will. It is drawn as if it would not come, and yet it acts as if not drawn. The Reformers called this grace irresistible, though they did not understand it as abrogating freedom. Our Lord obeyed voluntarily, and, it may also be said, necessarily and irresistibly. God is good by what Edwards called a moral necessity. The Father's will in Christ did not destroy His divine or His human will, though the latter always acted in accordance with it. The life of the Spirit is an incomprehensible will in the will of man; and where the Spirit is, there is freedom.

The old Calvinists rightly held that this life is a holy principle disposed to act, or a moral habit preceding moral acts, which flow from it as a stream from its source. There is in the soul a disposition to act which gives to the acts their character. The will is not indifferent, and the morality of an act is determined by its motive, so that a holy principle alone can be the source of a holy act. No number of acts can produce a holy disposition. Sin entered without a motive. Its entrance is a mystery of freewill, which joined sin with itself; for, just as in the case of reason, will also is a duality of subject and object, the resultant being the unity of both, and what the will obeys it unites with itself. In all cases, responsibility rests upon the will and not upon the nature, as man's mind is not subject to any law of causation which determines it. More is needed for a life of holiness than for a life of sin, and therefore the motive for the former must be instated, and this the Spirit does in regeneration. Man is created anew with an impulse for good works, ready to bear the yoke that is easy. He encounters no difficulty in the disposition itself, whatsoever outward difficulties he may have to contend with, for the potential habit acts and exists in the will by free activity.

Certainty is an invariable concomitant of life. Every life has it according to its nature. We can trust nothing so implicitly as our own consciousness, which is never without an element of knowledge. This knowledge is the result of two factors, an inward and an outward, and this duality yields this certainty in every faculty. Religious truth, also being objective and subjective, guards faith from illusions and doubts. He that believes has the testimony in himself, and this conviction is incommunicable except to him that has the same life. It is independent of all external evidence, and it not only owes nothing to it, but gives it its value, and floods it with a new light, in which it testifies, as a sun lit up at the centre of a system calls forth a response in the brilliancy of its surrounding planets. They who experience the life can soon produce their creed, "We know." If there be a doubting Thomas, some outward evidence may be given, which enables faith to transcend the doubt, and in its eagle flight to travel far beyond sight, crying, "My Lord, and my God." The life reveals itself to others by its activity, because it is well known that he who possesses the qualities of a state proves that he is in that state.

Such a fellowship with God places man in a transcendent state. The Apostles' constant mode of appeal, in their exhortations to the Churches, is based upon this heavenly relationship. "Remember who and what you are, your parentage, your inheritance, your high calling; vindicate your birthright by dying to sin and by living to God. Your life is supreme in the universe, and is allied to that by which the Spirit works, and man conquers."

The Lord's words startled the mind of Nicodemus. He wondered, and was by wonder set on the path of knowledge. Being in earnest, the first difficulty he felt was personal rather than intellectual. Though he found our Lord's words hard to understand, his chief difficulty was to apply them to himself. The answer of Nicodemus is often looked upon as a jest, or as an expression of intellectual disdain. But this cannot be, for the case put by Nicodemus would seem equally impossible for the young. Nicodemus understood Jesus better than many who charge him with dulness. He understood the change to be a fundamental one, and he had doubts of the possibility of experiencing such a change at his advanced age. Nicodemus had no language by which he could express the radical nature of the change, except that which referred to natural birth. He grappled with truth as well as he could, and saw clearly that Jesus meant that man must enter into some formative womb, and, in some hidden matrix of vital forces, be so wrought upon as to become another man. The change was analogous to being naturally born of a mother, yet he knew not how that could be. As he was old, the time for great changes had passed for him. Cyprian expresses the same thought in his own case. "I used to regard it as a difficult matter, and especially difficult in regard to my character at that time, that a man should be capable of being born again, . . . put off what he had previously been, and, though retaining all his bodily structure, should be himself changed in heart and soul. How, said I, is such a conversion possible? that there should be a sudden divestment of all which, either innate, has hardened in the corruption of our moral nature, or, acquired by us, has become inveterate by long-accustomed use? I could not believe that I could be delivered, and was disposed to acquiesce in my vices; and, despairing of better things, I used to indulge my sins as if they were indigenous and actual parts of me. By the agency of the Spirit, a second birth restored me to be a new man. Then, at once, doubtful things began to assure themselves; dark things to be enlightened; what before was difficult began to suggest a means of accomplishment; what was thought impossible, to be capable of being attained."[1] Nicodemus enquired where a creative power existed that could work such a change and be efficacious in men grown old. He saw that the inherent difficulty of the case was greatly aggravated in its bearing upon his own personal condition.

Jesus answered both difficulties; and however His words may strike the modern reader, they evidently helped Nicodemus to understand. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Nature, combined with age, hinders not the work. Faith can enter into union with another "in the lower parts of the earth," and so transform that shadow of death that it shall become the fount of a resurrection-life.

"Water and Spirit" are not a *hendiadys* explaining the same idea, though they are one so far that they signify the same thing under a different aspect. The first corresponds to a man's state as a sinner, the second explains the nature of the new life. The Spirit, who was in Christ incarnate, could not quicken a sinner to the new life except through death. Even the heavenly things had to be sprinkled with blood, so that Christ had Himself to be sprinkled with blood before He could "sprinkle many nations." From the deep shades of His death there issued a power of life which is essentially a resurrection-life for man, and which the Holy Spirit alone can impart.

To associate the word "water" with baptism might furnish some explanation to a later generation; but to Nicodemus's mind it would have substituted for what was dark an enigma that was still darker. The Master-Teacher gave the light needed in words which had been used in the Old Testament, and which were known to all Israelites. John has given us an intimation of the meaning of the word "water" in chapter ii. Jesus and His newly found disciples were bidden to a marriage-feast, where it became clear that the true bridegroom was Jesus, and that His disciples were the bride. During the feast Jesus meditated upon the union for which He had to leave the Father, and now His mother also, and "cleave to His wife." While the Son mused over the nature of the union, His mother, impelled by the Spirit in a higher manner than she herself could understand, came to Him, saying, "They have no wine." The words sounded to Him as His death-knell, for He answered, "Mine hour is not yet come." Wine meant blood, and blood, a sacrifice to cleanse from sin. "Now there were six waterpots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying," and these, when filled and drawn, were found to contain wine. The first miracle was a miracle in the province of nature, turning the purifying water into wine. It signified the ratification of the covenant of love by blood in the marriage-feast of the Lamb. The "water" is the prophet's fountain for sin and uncleanness: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean" (Ezek. xxxvi. 25). This "clean water" is the water of purification after the twofold usage of the Mosaic ritual; the water of expiation in the consecration of the Levites, and the water prepared with the ashes of the red heifer, with hyssop and cedar wood, forming the quintessence of all that purified and strengthened life. This Ezekiel explains by the words that follow:

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[1] Cyp., *Ep ad Don.*

"And I will put My Spirit within you." The day of atonement showed a twofold aspect of purification which could not be represented by a single ritual act. One looked wholly towards God and the sanctuary; the other was directed wholly towards man. That which fulfils the two is so perfect as to gain for man access unto God, and also to gain for God access unto man. These two could not be foreshadowed under the Law by a single sacrifice, so as to purify at once the tabernacle and the people. Jesus, in order to effect both, passed through the tabernacle, which was His flesh, and made Himself a purification of sin. This purification, considered retrospectively as an accomplished fact, is a cleansing of sin rather than of persons, and from it flows the personal sanctifying power. The death of Jesus Christ was "through the Eternal Spirit," which gave an eternal virtue to the act, whereby the heavenly things were purified. Therefore the heavenly things were adapted to man as a sinner, and the throne was turned into a mercy-seat. The other aspect is like the first, for at the inauguration of the covenant man also was sprinkled, and thereby adapted to heavenly things.

The "water," therefore, is essential to the result. Baptism, which it is often taken to signify, is not essential to the new birth, but is its seal. The baptism of the Gentiles is emphatically declared to be obsignatory in its nature (Acts x. 47). Inasmuch as the Spirit has already descended upon the converts, the apostle asks, "Can any man forbid water?" The spiritual life gives the right to ordinances; and where the Spirit is, He outweighs all other considerations, and ordinances must follow. Irenæus says, "Where the Church is, there the Spirit is," and this saying contains a great truth. Yet a synagogue may become the synagogue of Satan. Its opposite is absolute and irrefragable: "Where the Spirit is, there the Church is." Life claims its seal and its acknowledged rights. Baptism is no more the new birth than the registration of a babe as a citizen is natural birth. It is its sanction and recognition. Baptism is a work, and work is the outcome of life; therefore the ordinance presupposes life. This does not deprive sacraments of their value. The marriage ceremony is not a fiction, nor is it to be discarded with impunity, for it is an authoritative seal of rights and a public confession of responsibilities. Sacraments are the seals and the supports of the blessings of the kingdom.

John himself illustrates the words "water and spirit" in his Epistle (1 John v. 4-8), and there they cannot be explained as meaning the sacraments without undermining his whole argument. He says that the Christian life is not in itself difficult, for "whatsoever is begotten of God, overcometh the world," as it depends upon Christ incarnate, who came "by water and blood." His coming had two aspects, which are distinct and yet one, and find a subjective and a vital testimony in man. If "water" signified baptism, "blood" would refer to the Lord's supper, and, so taken, they would both be symbols of symbols. The sacraments are objective; these witnesses are subjective. Christ came as a Prophet and He came also as a Priest; the Word and the Cross testify within the believer. The Spirit also beareth witness as the spirit of the glorified Christ. The three witnesses are distinct, and are the inward testimony of the Prophet by the water, of the Priest by the blood, and of the King by the Spirit. These three "agree in one," giving together a sure testimony.

"Spirit" was a term well known to Nicodemus, however strange to his ear was the necessity of being born of the Spirit. The Spirit was an almighty and irresistible agent, who wrought marvellous changes in men through the ages, and who had been promised in an especial manner for the Messianic times. The two great needs of man are forgiveness and communion, and in the Son and the Spirit both are given personally, and therefore without measure. That which is born of the Spirit is redeemed from sin and brought into the kingdom. The Spirit becomes a divine right, a "must," from within, an impulse of life that presses men onward and upward in the kingdom. "Be strong and of a good courage. Enter the land that is given thee. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it."

(*b*) THE NATURE OF THE NEW BIRTH (vers. 6-8).

To explain the need of regeneration, Jesus adds that every life corresponds to the nature of its parent. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In John's writings, when that which is begotten of God is considered impersonally, it is described by the neuter, to emphasise its nature and immanent properties. When the masculine is used, it expresses the person or the new life actively identified with man as his own personal life.

The word "flesh" is used in antithesis to spirit, and represents man's carnal and sinful nature. Sin originated in man's spirit, and the word "flesh" has no exclusive reference to the body, except as the body forms a part of man's being. "Flesh" designates the race as it is continued by a natural process. It is appropriated in its sinful tendency by each individual, and becomes in each personality an impulse of antipathy to God. The Spirit who dwells in Christ also is a race-power which may be appropriated by faith as the germ of a new life, and is thus the race-designation of the regenerate life. In both cases there is a community of life in the race, whether it be in Adam or in Christ.

In regeneration Christ is formed in the heart; and as the Spirit dwells in Christ, so He dwells in that which is born of God from the first. "Jesus was called a 'Holy Thing,' and this signifies the nature of the indwelling. The Spirit is the divine energy in operation, and the thing that is born is like its parent. Power is said to be in what is capable of it. The material of the new birth is Christ: the Spirit is the quickening energy conforming and perfecting the excellence."[1] The Spirit dwells in the spirit that is begotten of Him. He is the determining power in the whole man, body and soul, claiming him as God's dwelling-place, and sealing him for perfection in the resurrection-life, when the old dualism of our nature will be resolved, by the power of the Spirit, into a union of eternal blessedness. The man born of the Spirit has passed through so great a change that he has become a new creature. As a new creature he finds his real self in Christ, and so far as he finds himself he rests in the Lord, while he also strives to be found perfect in Him.

Nicodemus was silent and astonished. The holiness of Christ carried to his heart a conviction of the sinfulness of his own nature, while at the same time he was led to hope that the impassable gulf of sin could be bridged over by the Spirit. Jesus saw and answered his look, saying, "Marvel not," for a necessity lies in the divine order that even "ye must be born from above." When a man is born of the Spirit, his nature becomes like that of its parent; for in the sphere of life the effect is implicitly contained in the cause. In verse 8 "what is born of the Spirit" is in the masculine, which shows that Jesus speaks of the life as actively manifesting itself in him who is regenerated, and who is here compared to his parent. The use of the word "wind" (ver. 8) in our translation only hides the true point of the comparison. The spiritual life in man is compared to the Spirit Himself, who operates in it according to well-known characteristics often described in Scripture. He is free in His operations, breathing where and upon whom He wills, following no human rule in bestowing His gifts. His voice comes with authority in the winged words of those who feel His influence, and is charged with moral power and spiritual intelligence. To the world it is all an incomprehensible mystery. Men know not the source whence the Spirit comes, nor the purpose and end of His coming. So also is it with every one who is begotten of the Spirit. "The man whom the Spirit animates breathes by the Spirit, and gives out the voice of the Spirit."[1] These characteristics are the expression of freedom in accordance with a higher law, and of a moral authority which is due to divine inspiration; and both the freedom and the authority are incomprehensible to the world alike in origin and end.

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[1] Basil.

The Spirit operates in the regenerate after His own law. Grace has its law, which is justified in its own children. When God passes by the many mighty and noble, and chooses such as are to all appearance unworthy, the result invariably justifies the choice. Whosoever is born of the Spirit also acts spontaneously. He is a law unto himself, and is not ruled by the motives which actuate the world.

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[1] Bengel, *in loc.*

Where the Spirit is, there is freedom, which, in the regenerate, is an essentially free relation of life to God. Christ acts above and *for* men; the Spirit works only in men who are born of Himself; and there He is (as Seneca said of humility), "an eye that sees everything but itself." The new life is independent of all external influences, determining itself in freedom, though never without reason. Its power to act "as it willeth" implies, not power to do anything at any time, but power to carry out in freedom the impulses of its life. It cannot be reduced into subjection. To cease to be free is for it to cease to be. Its nature is sonship, and sonship is freedom. This life is a mystery to the world; an indefinable and incalculable quantity. It appears to the world at one moment to be innocent, submissive and tractable; at another, an entertaining oddity to afford pleasant diversion in a monotonous world. At other times, the world stands in awe in its presence, seeing with terror how it undermines the foundations upon which the world is based. Now it is a refreshing breeze in the sultry heat of the day; now a rushing whirlwind changing the familiar landmarks, uprooting and destroying what is valued by the world. This life moves on earth in a way which no foresight can anticipate. If oppressed, it is not crushed; when cast down, it is not destroyed. Whenever its power blazes out in burning flame, the world in its folly vainly tries to quench it. When it seems to be extinguished, the life from its very ashes bursts out anew in a mighty resurrection. It cannot die, for it is free. It has a hidden source of vitality of which the world knoweth not.

Wherever it exists, the life has a "voice" which has an authoritative power corresponding to the old prophetic voice. The word "voice" is often used by John to express rightful authority and power, exhibited actively and experienced by others. It was that in Christ which caused men to be conscious of His authority, appealing as it did to their conscience and reason. Every life has a voice-power: "there are so many kinds of voices in the world, and no kind is without signification" (1 Cor. xiv. 10). Every form of life, too, has its articulate utterance, to which a distinct signification belongs. The voice of him who is born of the Spirit is of the nature of the Spirit Himself, and has the same quality of sound. His speech betrayeth him, that he has been with Christ. A breathing of infinite moral power into the finite, a flowing of the spiritual into the world, that makes the regenerate a centre of spiritual force, and even in the simplest believer has authority. The spiritual man is the messenger of a life which he bears within himself, and whose secret he has authoritative power to communicate.

Christian men, while dilating upon the power of spiritual gifts for office, are apt to forget the infinite powers that lie in Christian graces. These graces are seldom credited with the power to vindicate themselves without the aid of some visible help or worldly motive. Yet the fruits of the Spirit are the mightiest of forces, and the spiritual life is its own armour and defence. The Apostle Paul gives us a complete list of the gentle Christian graces (Gal. v. 22). Love leads the way, as the mightiest force of all. Self-interest wins no battles; and soldiers, to gain real victories, must fight for other objects than self, in which case it will be found that "love is strong as death," and that "many waters cannot quench it." Love is divine might in "joy." Where the joy of the Lord is men's strength, it is the delight belonging to high motives and glorious issues, the bloom of noble deeds and of high aspiration. "Peace" is a kingly power ruling the whole man, keeping him like a sea of glass before the throne, upon which storms may fall without ruffling its calm, for his eye is fixed upon, and reflects, the royal calm of the throne. "Longsuffering," often stigmatised as cowardice, is an unlimited reserve of strength, with an endless power of endurance. "Kindness" is the courtesy of true dignity that is not compromised by being accessible to all. Rich in itself, clad in heavenly purity, it sits unabashed even amongst publicans and sinners. Moral pride is a symptom of poverty. "Goodness" is an inexhaustible source of energy. "Faith" is steadfastness unto death. "Meekness" is condescension that is not conscious of itself, and, being invulnerable, it conquers the world. "Temperance" is self-control, producing in man a world of order, where every faculty and passion have their proper place and duty. These graces are lovable and "terrible as an army with banners," and, seeing them arrayed in their might, the Apostle adds, "March on in the Spirit." Tertullian observes that it was the innocence of the saints of old that conquered the Roman Empire.

He that is born of the Spirit has a source and an end that the world cannot understand, and is like unto Christ, who said, "I know whence I came, and whither I go" (John viii. 14), while the Jews knew not whence He was, nor whither He went; they only heard the sound thereof. Human motives are known to the human mind; the spiritual is beyond its understanding. Morality is known, and zeal for Church or religion is understood. What is spiritual may be misrepresented, and in consequence persecuted or neglected. Christ had His "whence" and "whither" in His Sonship, which was "with the Father." He who is born of the Spirit knows whence he is, and whither he goes; his knowledge is innate. Like a mariner's compass, it points steadily to the "whither" even when the heavens are not clearly discerned. From an unknown land he who is born of the Spirit comes, and passes into the unknown, master of his own destiny, like a vessel laden with merchandise coming from some strange port, its sails filled with a breeze whose path men cannot trace, and moving towards a land unknown of man.

> "But why drives on that ship so fast,
> Without or wave or wind?
>
> . . . . .
>
> The air is cut away before
> And closes from behind."[1]

Though landsmen understand not the motion and course of the ship, the mariners know whither they are bound. He that is born of the Spirit makes the voyage of life with the consciousness that he is seeking his native country.

(*c*) THE SOURCE AND THE PRINCIPLE OF REGENERATION.

Nicodemus had doubts on account of age, and an intellectual difficulty as to the means of the new birth, and he burst out with the cry, "How can these things be?" which is closely allied to, "What must I do to be saved?" This initial wonder has its corresponding wonder when the work is done. "Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have been bereaved, solitary, and an exile. Behold, I was left alone; these, where were they?" (Isa. xlix. 21).

Responding to the astonishment of Nicodemus at the nature of the birth from above, Jesus points out that he ought to have been able to understand such a matter by reason of his privileges as a teacher in Israel. He then proceeds to answer the question, "How?" He explains the ground of faith, and its object, which was Himself. As a Prophet and a Priest He revealed the spirit of love that was eternally in the Godhead.

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[1] Coleridge, "Ancient Mariner."

The first step needed was Faith: "believe, and believe in Me." The ruler had confessed Him to be a teacher come from God, and Jesus now claims his faith. The need and the possibility of a great change lay in the very name of Israel. If such truths as could be revealed by earthly forms were not believed, how could the heavenly truths themselves be received, the truths whose nature precludes the possibility of their being discerned except by faith as a vision of life? "Verily, verily, we speak that we do know, and bear witness of that we have seen." Jesus speaks as one of a class. The plural "we" includes all who had begun to see the glory of Christ, and does not denote the Prophets, nor their greatest representative, the Baptist, for by verses 31 and 32 they are excluded as being of the earth, and speaking of the earth: "He that cometh from heaven is above all" (ver. 31). Whoso believes in Him sets his seal to the fact that God is true; for the believer, like Christ, has an immediate knowledge of heavenly things, which are the true realities, and receives the Spirit personally, and not by measure. John, in his epistle, bases his treatment of the regenerate life on the power of immediate knowledge that is contained in it (1 John i. 1-4). Those who have the heavenly life know and testify, being face to face with absolute truth. It has an impulse of utterance, and they speak. They also testify to the truth, and by the testimony the speaker is identified with the truth, so that he who receives the one receives the other. Whosoever has become responsible for the truth, the truth stands responsible for him, and the destiny of both is the same. Jesus here unites with Himself His disciples, who saw Him by faith. The first need was to know who Christ was; and His incarnation is the first great truth on which faith lays hold. The Spirit was in Christ revealing His Person, and also in the disciples, who beheld Him in such a manner that, seeing Him, they spake and testified to His Person.

Agur complains that he lacked knowledge of the Holy One. "Who hath ascended up to heaven and descended? Who hath gathered the wind in His fist? Who hath bound the waters in His garment? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if thou knowest?" Christ is the only One who fulfils these conditions. "And no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven." To ascend to the Godhead was impossible for human wisdom. No teacher had ever expounded the deep things of God to human ears; no eye had ever seen the divine realities in God; neither had man's imagination, in its deepest intuition or highest poetic flights, ever reached "whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. ii. 9). Such union between earth and heaven could not have been brought about by angels. When they, in giving the Law, stepped between God and man, it proved that God and man stood apart unreconciled (Gal. iii. 19). In fact, any creature would have been infinitely distant from both God and man. In Christ "God is one," the unifying principle of heaven and earth, wherein lies the mystery of our salvation. "Son of man," as the name of our Lord, expresses this duality in unity; so that what Jesus claims, when applying to Himself the name Son of man, is just what belongs to Him in the duality of relations that are represented in His Person.

In Psalm viii., whence the name was in the first instance taken, it means the earthborn destined to the highest divine glory; and in Daniel vii. 13 it expresses the might and authority of the Person. Here, and elsewhere, when used by Christ, it combines both in one, and the verse is a definition of the name "Son of man."

The doctrine of the Person of Christ here taught is introduced to throw light upon the nature of the regenerate life which is given by the Spirit, and which includes a perfect communion between heaven and earth, united now in the Person of Christ. He has come down; He has ascended; He is in heaven. That no man hath ascended to God is an acknowledged truth; for no thought or growth, conscious or unconscious, could attain to the knowledge of God our Saviour. In order that man may know God, God must become man, and a personal relation must heal the personal breach. The true divine Prophet must be Himself a divine Being, and present the truth not as what He has, but as what He is, saying, "I say unto you," and not, as the Prophets, "Thus saith the Lord." To creatures truth comes: it has somewhere its home, where it exists. It exists in Christ, for He is the truth; and its revelation is His self-revelation. Our Lord says that He descended in one accomplished act, and that He ascended in one permanently efficacious manner, which continues as the result of the descending. The descending involved the ascending as a permanent condition of His Person. Whatever limitations are included in the mystery of the incarnation, it does not mean that, when He, by the hypostatical union, assumed our nature He was separated from God. Where He was essentially, there also, though in the form of a servant, He was in immediate knowledge of His eternal unity with the

Father and in an uninterrupted fellowship with Him. It was not a recollection, nor an enraptured state; but He had the divine in His self-consciousness. Jesus, as Son of man, saw with His human eye—what none could have seen before—the heavens opening. The personal Spirit of office that anointed Him to be a Prophet, gave Him the experience that, as "Son of man, He was in heaven," and so enabled Him to testify to the heavenly things in the Godhead. The reading, "who is in heaven," is doubtful, yet the thought follows of necessity as the synthesis of the two previous sentences. Thus, in Christ, there was a way prepared for God towards men, that God might dwell among men and heaven become earth; and a way for man towards God, and this was to make earth as heaven. The new life, communicated in the Son by the Spirit, testifies of itself that it has descended, and because it has come from above it has issued in a permanent state of ascension to heaven; and myriads, though on earth, have praised God that they have been blessed in heavenly places. The life is the same in believers as in Jesus.

As Christ became daily more perfect there came to Him more and more a twofold impulse of spiritual life: one towards God, the other towards men; and this is the case also in believers. Being found in fashion as a man, He ascended as He descended. In Christ the descending was a condition of the moral ascending; so that while with every step of obedience He came nearer to man, He ascended also nearer and nearer to the Father. This was essential to the perfection of Him who as a Prophet revealed the mystery that was hidden until He came. In the case of angels, ascending goes before the descending (John ix. 51); and for men a fellowship of life with the Father in Christ includes a mission of redeeming love to the world. Every going up to the mount has its corresponding coming down to men, and every act of saving self-denial, like a death, will result in the further growth of a risen life.

The moral descending and ascending progressed together in Christ. He could not be a perfect Prophet without being also a Priest, for the truth of salvation demanded concurrent self-sacrifice. In Christ the perfect Prophet was merged in the Priest, and both together in the King. On the Mount of Transfiguration, when Christ's ministry was drawing to a close and His passion beginning, the voice from heaven gave the clue to the situation, signifying that the Prophet still spake. The command is given to "Hear Him" who would now as a Prophet teach by His death what Moses and Elias saw from afar. The three offices are united in Christ, though one may be seen clearer in one period of His earthly life, and another in another. He carried the Cross, testifying to the truth; and divine wisdom crucified is the crown of His teaching. In John the phrase "to do the truth" signifies righteous conduct, and therefore truth is the relation of one person to another. The relation of man to God is the essence of the Priesthood. To honour Christ as a Teacher without receiving Him as our Priest is to receive the truth in vain. Jesus is generally acknowledged to be an unrivalled moral Teacher; yet many in every age, as the Gnostics of old, in their search for truth forget the Cross, wandering in illusions and mazes of error. Every truth which Jesus taught, and every grace He inculcated, demanded the Cross. Repentance, remission, faith, hope and love call for it, and they who see Him as the Truth see Him as the Lamb. By descending He revealed and taught what was man's relation to God; by ascending

He revealed what God was to man. The mission from the Father involved a return to the Father. This return was only possible through the Cross, which is the depth of the descending, and, according to John, the first step in His glorification. So the flesh as the organ of revelation could profit nothing without the Cross. "What, then, if ye should behold the Son of man ascending where He was before?" (John vi. 62). It was when that took place that His words became spirit and life in power.

Without the death man could not understand the teaching of Christ nor make it his own. The rocks must be pulverised, that life may grow out of the soil. The teaching of the Son of man could not be productive of life without His sufferings. Man's understanding in divine things includes his conscience, and truth rightly apprehended is righteousness, which is a vital relation of person to person.

The miracles were a part of the prophetic work of Christ, and they all pointed to the Cross. They are treated in a subdued, apologetic tone in our day, and it is passing strange that by the wisdom of the Spirit they should have been preserved in the gospels. Their sphere is nature and man's physical constitution. Our belief in the miracles depends upon our answer to the question, "Who is He?" It was said in scorn, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save," and this statement had more logic in it than most of the remarks made about His miracles in our own day. If Jesus was to meet this scornful scoffing, and save Himself, His mightiest miracle must be wrought upon His own Person—a requirement which was fulfilled on the resurrection morn. The physical was a part of His own personality, and was related to the total order of things, so that His rising from the dead was a condition of His becoming the Captain of our salvation. His works were replete with the symbolism of His mission. They were parables in acts, and promises written in deeds. Christ explains them in John v. 36. The works had been given Him by the Father, and, so given, they were His, and ever in His hands. They were given with the intention that they should be "finished," as is declared in the verse, where a word in the future tense is used to signify bringing them into consummation. They were being perfected as His masterpieces in salvation. The significance of the acts lay not in their power, but in their purpose. The healings were allied to the atonement (Matt. viii. 17). Christ wrought miracles upon nature, which was plastic to His touch; He carried all to the Cross and filled them with an infinite store of saving truth. They are the Gospel carved in nature and human flesh. They are also prophetic, and cast light upon the full redemption that was to come.

The Spirit takes of what is Christ's, in whom, as Teacher, heaven and earth are one, and who has solved the problems of the deep as well as those of the heights. "Who shall descend into the abyss?" corresponds to "Who shall ascend into heaven?" The problems of both are one and inseparable, and the teacher of the heavenly things must illuminate the deep also. In the moral descending there was no turning back; from Bethlehem to the right hand of God there was continuous progress. For Him the resurrection was not a mere returning to earth, but it involved the ascension. Jesus passed through darkness, turning it to light: through death, changing it into life; through sin and wrath, changing them into righteousness. In Him the depth and the height are one. The vast orb is flooded with light—one great circle, without darkness in God or in man. Earth's opacity and its shadows vanish, leaving the Father of lights alone where no change will ever throw a shadow (Jas. i. 17).

That the Prophet of divine wisdom must be a Priest is the doctrine taught in verse 14. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." In Christians there is a natural disinclination to bring Christ into comparison with the serpent. The brazen serpent could not have been objectionable to the moral sense of the Jews; and had the serpent been merely the symbol of evil, Jesus could not have exhorted His disciples "to be wise as serpents." Some have sought for an explanation in the medicinal virtue of poisons, which, by accelerating the processes of life, suspend it. The explanation offered by some of the old Fathers was that it was a case of poison to poison, the homœopathy of grace, destroying sin with the similitude of sin; others think that a reference is implied to the Egyptian symbol of the healing art, which was connected with Egyptian worship. But such a symbol, had it been adopted, would have tended to idolatry. The writer of the Book of Wisdom has given an explanation which is in the right direction: "He was saved not by the thing he saw, but by Thee, that art the Saviour of all . . . Thy mercy . . . Thy Word, O Lord, which healeth all things" (Wis. xvi. 7-12). The serpent in Scripture is the symbol of wisdom, and, in the history of Israel, of divine wisdom when contrasted with human or Satanic wisdom. Wisdom apart from obedience to the divine order becomes earthly craftiness, sensual and devilish, and man's nature is envenomed by it. Wisdom obedient to the divine will is divine. The clue to the explanation is given in the narrative of the Exodus. Moses, having been rejected by his people, answered the Lord's call, saying, "They will not believe me." The

Lord said, "What is that in thine hand?" Moses answered, "A rod," and the Lord said, "Cast it on the ground." Moses did so, and it became a serpent, and Moses fled from it. The Lord said, "Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail." And he did, and it became his rod (Exod. vii. 8, 13). To Moses this was an assurance of divine wisdom that would enable him to guide the people. To the Egyptians it was a sign well understood, showing that the wisdom conferred upon Moses would conquer all the wisdom of the religious teachers in Egypt, and confound their craftiness. It was also to Israel a well-understood sign that Moses was endowed with divine wisdom to lead God's people. His rod, that was turned into a serpent, was the badge of his office and the instrument by which he wrought miracles. Christ was the wisdom of God, and the brazen serpent showed this wisdom lifted up. The old Jewish teacher was right: "Thy Word healeth all things."

The incarnate wisdom, in order to possess healing virtue, must be "lifted up." "Lifting up" is a phrase of double meaning—honour and death—and answers to the Cross, which combined shame and glory (Gen. xl. 13, 19). Penal death had a religious signification in the old world, and partook of the nature of a sacrifice, by which a thing was devoted to God. In Israel anything so devoted was sacred and most holy to the Lord. The ban cut off an object from human use, and rendered it irredeemable, for the object thus acquired the character of a propitiation to wrath and of an accursed thing. All that was identified with such persons or objects was offered up together with the accursed one. Christ was lifted up as an accursed thing, and He consecrated Himself willingly to be a propitiation for sin (Gal. iii. 13). Combining the shame and the glory, He was "cut off" from men; and, being "lifted up out of the world," He draws all and heals all. The Welsh proverb, "Where there's a cross, there's a rest," expresses a great truth.

According to St. Paul, Christ is the wisdom of God and the power of God, because He was crucified. The foolishness and the weakness of the Cross have become the wisdom and the power of God (1 Cor. i. 30). The wisdom of God is said to consist of three great principles, two of which are co-ordinate, and the third reaches on to the future. Christ was made unto us wisdom from God—namely, righteousness, sanctification and also redemption.[1] The prophet of wisdom must be priest and king to communicate this wisdom to men. The wisdom has a perfect relation to God in righteousness, a perfect likeness of nature to God in sanctification, and perfect liberty in body and soul in redemption. By this wisdom, the wisdom of the world and of Satan was taken in its own craftiness, and caught in its own guile. The principalities and powers bound Christ to the Cross, and clung to Him as an entangling garment. Once there, He divested and rid Himself of them, leaving them impaled and gibbeted, objects of shame and derision. With a loud voice He triumphed boldly and publicly over them on the tree. The spoilers were now spoiled, and Himself glorified, to their dismay and astonishment (Col. ii. 15).

The prophet therefore must be the priest, descending and ascending, and flooding all with light, by the Spirit who was given to glorify the work. A Northern poet, beholding the milky way, dreamt a dream. Two hearts were separated wide asunder, and the strongest built a bridge to span the distance in silence and darkness. Satan, winging his way, found the bridge, and, ascending to the Judge, accused the builder. The King on His throne answered, "Begone, Satan," and, addressing His mighty ones, said, "What love has wrought, the God of love will glorify," and He breathed upon the work, so that it was illuminated, and the way became studded with stars. God breathed His Spirit upon the work of redemption in Christ, so that He became the Light of the world and the Way to the Father along which the Spirit of truth guides His own. What love had done, the God of love glorified. Life in God is the highest privilege that man can attain to, and the greatest joy. The joy of casting out devils, or of seeing Satan hurled as lightning into darkness and the deep abyss, is no joy compared to having one's name written as a member of the great family of God (Luke x. 20).

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[1] Dr. T. C. Edwards, *in loc.*

This must be so, for "God so loved the world." This great verse traces salvation to its fountain-head, and gives the sum-total of its manifestation as a love that is absolutely unique; giving a unique gift of equal dignity; averting an incomparable evil; embracing the widest universality and securing life eternal. It is not the Father, but the Godhead, that is said to have loved, which is represented by the Father as the fount of the distinctions in the Godhead. The name God refers to the Godhead in unity as the one God, wherein Father, Son and Holy Spirit co-equally loved, and, loving, gave. The object of the love is the world. In chapter xvii. 5 "world" signifies the universe; in chapter i. 10 it has a universal and a moral character; here it means the world as it is, sinful and under wrath. The world is an organised whole, which, owing to sin, lies in the power of the Evil One. Over it a pitying love is seen hovering, seeking a way to be merciful—a love that is unique, self-caused and incomprehensible.

Love, as the general benevolence of a creator towards the creature, men knew and understood. Love towards the lovable is comprehensible. Love towards the unworthy, the sinful and the alienated is a mystery; and even when revealed remains ever incomprehensible. "Grace"—that is, favour—towards the unworthy appears less mysterious. Yet the freedom of God's grace is based on that of His love. All love is not the same love, and this love of God for the world transcends all other manifestations of goodness in God, and stands by itself. It is the innermost shrine of the Godhead, where there is an altar, and the Eternal Spirit of self-sacrifice is the fire that burns thereon (*cp.* Isa. vi. 6). It is "the mind" that was in Christ, and it was in Christ because it was in the Godhead. It was His innermost mind, the source and basis of all thoughts and purposes, hidden beneath all before the foundation of the world. Being the root of all, it is the thought that runs through all, as a great unifying principle, forming the whole into one after the divine pattern. Its manifestation is the revelation of the Trinity, and because of it God is absolutely free from all creature limitations, and gives according to His own good pleasure with a love which measures itself and not the object. This love is without a cause. Sin, too, seems to have been so. Redeeming love is self-caused, and appears spontaneous in Redemption. Natural man cannot comprehend the love, and seeks to find merit, even in man's need. The regenerate comprehend it when the Spirit sheds it abroad in their hearts. God's love alone caused the world to be loved. The need of reconciliation on the part of God lay in the riches of His love; on the part of man, it lay in his sin, as the object of God's wrath. John explains the nature of this love in God and in men who experience it (1 John iv. 7-12).

It is not seen on earth except when it springs from the divine fountain, and it is peculiar in its nature in man as it is in God. It manifests itself in men that are begotten of God as a divine impulse to save the world from sin, and so carries on in men the great purposes of redemption. Isaiah describes the vision that conferred it upon him (Isa. vi.). He saw the glory and the train which filled the Temple, and the glory was the fulness of the earth. He heard the mighty praise of the fiery seraphim to the thrice Holy. He felt the thresholds moving, rocked by the voice, and fell down in despair because of his own and his nation's sin. In the temple there was an altar, and the Spirit was the fire of that altar. The seraph took a live coal from the altar and touched the prophet's lips, and he, having thus received forgiveness, was possessed by the Spirit of love. The terrible praise of the seraphim grew fainter and more distant; and he, with a circumcised ear, heard another voice, gentle, still and sad, sounding through the vast temple, and anxiously enquiring, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—the question of saving love in the Holy Trinity. Isaiah stood up, looked up, and, consumed by the fire of love now burning within him, said, "Here am I, send me." The voice said, "Go," and he went with the salvation of love glowing in the marrow of his bones. So John says, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10). We love *because* we have the mightiest reason for loving. "God *so* loved" with a love absolutely causeless; for "God is love." Loving with this love, God abideth in us, and the love is progressively perfected in us. "Hereby know we that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit," who is the love. The love is discerned in the Son sent to be a propitiation, and nowhere else. No man hath beheld God. The test of this love of God in man is the impulse to save men whom we see. Thus and thus alone is it manifested in us. It is unique in kind, *sui generis*, "Behold what manner of love it is." Wherever it exists it purifies its possessor from sin, and gives him the hope of sonship. Towards the world it is saving love; the mysterious presence and working of the Trinity within man, causing him to strive to save his brother man. It thus fulfils the second commandment, enabling man to love his neighbour as himself—the old commandment with a new motive. Under its influence man loves himself so as to will his own salvation, and loves his neighbour with the same love. The religious sense of heathendom felt the benevolence of God in all His natural gifts. The exaltation of God in Israel was a richer truth, for "His excellency is over Israel, and His strength is in the skies." Far beyond both, and fulfilling both, is the love of God in the Son. This is unique and mysterious. God was never so exalted as when He "so loved"; and when we scale the heights, we are enabled to scan the iniquity of sin.

The modern theory of the divine love as benevolence apart from propitiation—an impossible conception to the old world—is but an abuse of the doctrine. Pretending to exalt and honour God, it really impoverishes His love. By making it general and something wider than a gift offered to faith, this conception makes the love so superficial as to destroy the relation between God as a Saviour and man as a sinner. So attenuated does the love become as to appear weaker even than human love, for it is claimed as a right which God owes His creatures, and vanishes in the claim.

God, by His love, "gave His Son," which is more than "sending," for it is the surrendering of the Son unto death. Jesus was the only one who could say that His mission could not be accomplished without His death. The mission gave Him the authority to lay down His life as a sacrifice. The divine love resounded in the Son of man as a command, to which He gave spontaneous obedience; it was communicated to His humanity by the Spirit in Him searching the deep things of God. The command was twofold, for it gave Him authority to lay down His life, and to take it up again,—to lay it down in order to take it up again,—in the line of the divine plan, according to which it must needs be taken up again. These two aspects together imply a sacrifice, which the old types imperfectly shadowed by the death of the victim, and by the taking of the life-blood to the sanctuary as a symbol of resurrection. Christ laid down His soul—the power of His visible life—which, sown in dishonour and weakness, He took up in glory and power.

God gave His Son, His only begotten Son. "Only begotten" (in chap. i. 14) points to the relation of the Son to the Father; here it points to His relation to the Father and also to the world, signifying at the same time divine essence and sovereignty. In giving the Son, God gave Himself. The gift was the Giver, and the Giver was in the gift. To all other acts of goodness a limit is set by the conditions of the creature, and no act can exhaust its cause. In all else the question might be asked "Why one?" or, "Why so many, and no more?" seeing that He had the "residue of the Spirit" (Mal. ii. 15). When the Son was given there was no residue of the Spirit. "To give so that He might have Himself was the begetting, not that God is one and has another, but He is what He has in the Son." This divine unity with the Father and the Spirit was not infringed upon in the surrendering of the Son. There is a sound of sorrow in Christ's description of God sending His Son (Luke xx. 13). We dare not divest the divine love of what corresponds to sensibility. Our God is not as Deism would have Him, a Stoic in the heights. He loved the Son, He loved the world, and He loved the one through the other. God loved the Son because He laid down His life. Dr. Lewis Edwards has well said that the knife in Abraham's hand was as heavy for him to carry as the wood was for Isaac. Jesus was God's own Son, the only begotten of the Father. The word "own"[1] expresses a unique relation. Husband implies a wife, and parent a child. God is not the Father except as possessing the Son—His own Son. This personal possession in the Godhead shows the nature and the measure of the gift. In giving the Son, God gave Him whom, as Father, was His own. God is not Father, nor does He stand in the relation of fatherhood to any one except to the Son and those to whom the Son reveals Him. He was the "Only begotten Son," in whom the divine majesty was revealed, and whom He made the heir of all things. Abraham had a child beside Isaac, yet Isaac was his only son—his beloved. All the promises were in Isaac, and, without Isaac, Abraham was as dead. The expression "own" thus points to the majesty of the Son, in whom all God's purposes and counsels were treasured up. Him He surrendered to death for the world.

Wherefore the surrendering? Justice did not demand it, neither did Jesus die to gain God's love. It was the love that loved the world which called for a propitiation, to fulfil in man's nature all the requirements of Justice, and remove wrath. The Spirit given to Jesus was the Spirit of this love. Righteousness is a necessity in the Godhead, and this necessity is specially ascribed to the Father as the fount of the Trinity. All the demands of righteousness may become demands of love, and what is necessary in righteousness becomes free in love. All the divine principles are united in salvation. In it God has reconciled the world unto Himself, and unified the twofold aspect of the divine character which had obtained before Christ came. Ancient saints recognised this twofold aspect in God as their Covenant God. Job in his distress appealed from God to God Himself, and said, "Give now a pledge, be surety for me with Thyself," and longed for one equal with God to plead with God. Was there not in God that which could unite justice and goodness? Yes: in Christ, in whom the Spirit dwells, who is the fulness of the Godhead, both principles are merged in a higher unity.

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[1] Welsh, *priod.*

In giving the Son, God surrendered Him to wrath. The death of Christ is represented as a day of judgment. In Romans i. it is shown that the Gentile world was undergoing disintegration, for heathendom had no life. The gods were dead or dying, and everything was crumbling to destruction. The same is shown to be the case with Jewish society, and the prince of this world was coming to claim what was his own by right. Judgment had to come, and when its hour struck, a Lamb of God appeared "in due season," as the victim upon whom the judgment was to fall, and who would claim the world as His own. The hour of judgment and grace struck together. When divine judgment was ready, God sent His Son forth from and unto Himself into our nature, to be a propitiation, to show His righteousness, "because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God." God justified all His ways toward men in the past, showing His righteousness in the present time, so "that He might Himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26). Righteousness, in the sense of justice, implies that God and man are seen the one against the other. In "the Law of faith," which is the righteousness of God, God alone is seen offering reconciliation to man. The necessity of judgment is become a saving "must" "by faith in His blood," and God is shown to be just and the Justifier of the ungodly. The bond written in ordinances, and valid against man in the conscience, is lifted away from between us and God, and that which was actively hostile to us is blotted out in His blood because it was nailed with Him to the Cross (Col. ii. 14). It was rent and torn in the breaking of the body. At the same time the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, and the whole of the Temple became the holy place. "The Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple."

This wrath was the cup which Jesus trembled to take and drink. It was not through fear that He would be delivered into the hands of sinners, for He prayed on the cross that they might be forgiven. Neither did He fear the powers of darkness, for it was their hour, and what power they had was given them by God. He feared because God made Him a propitiation for sin. Here lay the divine "must" and "Shall I not drink it?" He bowed to God's wrath. This explains the Cross, which otherwise would appear unjust. The inward light of divine fellowship paled away, and the shadows grew deeper in unutterable loneliness. He was bereft of the communion of the Spirit, and overwhelmed by the loneliness of sorrow for sin, by the loneliness of death, by the loneliness of a judgment day. The darkness enveloped His soul. But out of the darkness, as "out of the belly of hell," came a cry with a loud voice, "My God, My God, why hast *Thou* forsaken Me?" (Mark xv. 34). The Father's fellowship had been withdrawn: yet in the uttermost darkness the Sonship spake in Christ. Why? To what purpose was He left bereft of His strength? The whole matter rests between God and Him. The natural light waned as if the oil ran low, and the lamp of God in Nature's temple was going out. Then the shadows began to pass and the dawn broke. Jesus, "knowing that all was now finished, said, I thirst." This expression of a natural need after toil was the sign of returning life. Earth heard the cry in its own way, and Heaven heard it in another. It was a thirst for the Spirit to refresh Him with communion,—the Spirit which was His own and which would quench His thirst. The Spirit returned in power, and in His strength Jesus cried *with a loud voice*, as with a shout of triumph, "It is finished!" Wrath is gone, the world redeemed, the Father glorified. Then, seeing the Father reaching forth His arms as He that "gathers His lambs in His arm," and turning toward the everlasting bosom, Jesus said, "O Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit," and, bowing His head, He passed through the veil.

This reconciliation is offered to the whole world. All the doctrines of the Gospel face the whole world and are applicable to all sorts and conditions of men. It has true universality because it is deep. Universality was a world idea in the days of our Lord. The Stoics had a vision of a universal kingdom in which virtue would be the inheritance of all, and which was the Roman Empire idealised. This kingdom was said to exist, but no one knew the way to it, and Lucian twitted the philosophers that it was a pure chance which of the philosophies man was to choose as a guide. "What thinker could he be that could show the way? When will an umpire appear, from whom we all may know that His teachings are without flaw; for we must have a divine authority for the truth that leads men thither."[1] This authority is in Christ, and in the seeming exclusiveness of the Gospel is found its moral sublimity and the real ground of its universality. Christ was the universal man, who was also the universal truth. Universality cannot be found except in and by the Spirit through Christ, because it is spiritual.

Jesus Christ thus became a quickening Spirit by sanctifying Himself for the sake of others, so that all that was earthly in Him was permeated with life. The heavenly things—the love of the Father, the grace of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit which comprise the Trinity of salvation in unity—became visible on earth. In the days of His flesh Jesus had the Spirit as the principle of His own life. It was necessary that He should be perfected, so as to become for others the cause or the source of salvation (Heb. v. 9). His death was His own new birth, to be the Son of God in power, and the Holy Spirit is His sovereign might. The Spirit who strengthened and supported Jesus in the work of redemption became by means of His death the form of the Redeemer's Person. "I come unto you" (John xiv. 18). The Spirit therefore is and has what Christ is, and is henceforth the Spirit of Jesus, who died and ever lives. Jesus Christ offered Himself through the "Eternal Spirit" (Heb. ix. 14), "the divine inward being of Christ, which by the death and the resurrection interpenetrated and, as it were, absorbed the flesh,"[2] so that He, who before was possessed by the Spirit, now possesses Him in His whole Person as the Son of man. He was son of

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[1] Lucian, iv.

[2] Delitzsch, *in loc.*

David according to the flesh, but was declared by the resurrection to be the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness. Christ derived His state of a quickening Spirit from the one source, as He had derived His state of the flesh from the other, and so He presents our whole nature in perfect union with Deity as our righteousness (Rom. i. 4). Henceforth He can see His seed, and prolong His days in the regenerated—the new race which is potentially in Him. The Spirit becomes ours through the humanity of Jesus, to the oneness of which with God the Holy Spirit is a witness. His Spirit is the author of faith, or spiritual union with Christ, the substance of the new kingdom, which is eternal life.

VIII.

FAITH.

JOHN iii. 16, *et seq.*

THE spiritual energy of Regeneration having been given in Christ, who is the wisdom and the power of God, salvation is freely offered to all men on the sole condition of faith. Faith appears to be that in man which corresponds to the nature of the salvation proffered in Christ. As a prophet of heavenly things, Christ had demanded faith of Nicodemus. This faith, when He was "lifted up," would confer eternal life; for "He was lifted up that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life." The expression "to believe *on*" or "*in*" is characteristic of John's writings, and is used only once in the other gospels. In John faith has many degrees, passing progressively from the lowest to the highest (John ii. 23, xx. 28). The object which faith grasps determines its quality; so that where the object is not spiritual faith is defective in spirituality. Even where true faith is rudimentary Jesus fosters and values it. Yet all that is incidental must either vanish or be brought into a personal relation, and without this Christ could not trust Himself to any.

By faith man lays hold *on* Christ, as the sole means of receiving Him. He is thereby united *to* Christ, and strives to realise the union more and more. For him who believes "on" or "in" the Son, Christ Himself is the desired end of the soul. Man may believe Him on account of His signs or His words, and so finally come to believe in Him personally, and gain Him ever more fully as his own. We also observe in true saving faith a difference of degree. It advances from a lower stage of the Spirit to a higher stage, in which Christ Himself is all in all.

A prominent place is ascribed to faith in the gospels because it is the only condition of receiving the Son (John i. 12). Faith and the Spirit are correlative. They are always present together, and constitute the chief characteristics of the New Dispensation. This faith is not merely doctrinal, but subjective and spiritual. Appearing along with the incarnate Christ, who is the mystery of godliness, faith by the Spirit becomes in man the counterpart of the coming of Messiah. So great is its pre-eminence in the Gospel narrative that every blessing is represented as given according to the faith of the recipient, and salvation is stated to depend wholly upon it. True faith is a spiritual state of mind created by the Spirit of Christ, by which man receives Him as the Son, and gives himself to Him. It is the mighty operation of the Spirit, which contains in itself the possibility of all that follows, and effects a personal union with Christ—with what He is and not merely with what He has—which issues in eternal life. Faith may thus be looked upon as a definite act in the past, or as a present state of life, or as a continuous effect of the Spirit of grace ever growing in strength from faith to faith. It stands in the power of God, the Most High; for the Spirit is its cause and support, and its root and growth are in His operation.

This pre-eminence of faith must be due to some inherent fitness for the work it is employed to effect. Such fitness is assumed in the notion of an instrument or means, although the force and the purpose may come from him who makes use of it. All good dispositions, desires and virtues are attributed to the Spirit, however dimly discerned His agency may be. Yet among all such gifts faith, and faith alone, is said to save. The work of God is "that ye believe"—a work which contains implicitly all that is demanded, or in other words all "the works of God." Its mysterious greatness consists in the fact that it confers a capacity for vitally possessing another person, so that the believer partakes of the life of the other. Faith is the exercise of man's personality in its highest and holiest aspect.

Faith has a moral aspect, and is very closely associated with the conscience, so that often the way of faith is prepared by the conscience. Conscience in man includes the sense of sin, which it brings home to him as his own. It has also an authoritative ideal, to which man ought to conform, and according to which, as a standard, it judges its possessor. The judicial power of conscience, and the moral ideal therein presented, both meet in Christ Jesus, who is their full realisation. The Spirit quickens that sensibility to sin from which the saving power of Christ proceeds. The same Spirit is also a power in conscience, elevating man to be his own judge, and presenting an ideal for which his nature yearns as for his lost self. In the natural man this general operation of the Spirit is the ground of civic virtue, the strength and the lifter-up of humanity, an aim to be attained and an ideal to be realised. It is often found apart from the worship of a deity. However imperfect, it keeps alive the natural longing for salvation, and creates, besides, an expectation of it. Those who are enlightened by revelation, both Jews and Gentiles, possess an intensified sense of sin, and in them the nobility of the ideal is greatly enhanced. The authority and the ideal meet in faith in Christ, the true representative Man, the Son of man, and the Judge whose entire revelation convinces of sin and presents to the conscience its ideal. Corresponding to these two elements in conscience, two great results are effected through faith, each of them in itself complete and perfect—namely, Justification and Regeneration.

Faith, in its relation to the Cross of our Lord, is the means by which man dies for and to sin. This death is effected by the operation of the Spirit in uniting the believer to Christ who died, and who, having life in Himself, quickens the dead. The dying of the believer is followed by the quickening, wherein the exceeding greatness of God's power communicates the resurrection-life "according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. i. 19, 20). Faith is thus the means of that mightiest work of the Spirit in which God's quickening energy creates a movement of life in man, quickening him and raising him also to heavenly places in Christ. The only means of attaining this life is by becoming free from the guilt of sin through faith in Christ crucified, to whom the believer is united as to his other self. To abandon outward sins is hard; intellectual pride and self-assertion are stubborn. To cast out moral pride is still more difficult. Yet for a natural man the severest duty of all is to abandon self, for this seems to him to be self-annihilation. Man turns with aversion from the thought, for the heart is by nature at enmity with God, and recognises in Him its own condemnation, and interprets salvation as the degradation of manhood. In Christ, the propitiation for our sins, the Spirit becomes the medium for the change, and He exercises His power as the creative kingly might of the risen Saviour. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). St. Paul does not say that God treated Christ as a sinner, but as sin, the quality itself, in order that we might become not merely righteous men, but "the righteousness of God in Him." The mutual transference of character between the Redeemer and the believer is complete, and faith through the Spirit works in us that which corresponds to the death of Christ, who died for and to sin. Substitution in some form is essential to the notion of a sacrifice; but there can be no substitution without union, and every sacrifice offered has to be immediately connected with him who offers it, so as to be his own. Hence it was necessary, in order that the death of Christ might become man's own sacrifice, that man should be united with Christ. Faith unites the believer with Christ by the likeness of His death, so that Christ's death becomes the believer's own death for sin, as if he himself offered it, and it also quickens the soul by the likeness of Christ's resurrection. Man accepts Christ crucified, and in accordance with the nature of every sacrifice he appropriates His death for sin in order to attain to a new risen life that issues from Christ's death. He, therefore, lives no longer to sin, but to God, because the essential principle of the life of Christ was that it was a life offered to God. The Spirit that unites with Christ, and is Himself the bond, enables man to become more than righteous. He makes man "the righteousness of God," which is sonship. "Man being found in Christ, God beholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin by not imputing it, taketh away the punishment due thereto by pardoning it, and accepteth him in Christ Jesus as perfectly righteous as if he had himself fulfilled all that was commanded him, shall I say, more perfectly righteous than if himself fulfilled the whole law."[1] We are in the sight of God the Father what the very Son of God Himself is. In this union with Christ's death faith must stand alone, having no fellowship or co-operation of gifts or graces, whether concomitant or consequent.

The Spirit of Christ so penetrates faith that it partakes of the grace of the Incarnation, and becomes an emptying of self. This renunciation of self by Christ was the way by which He took our nature. He "counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself" (Phil. ii. 6). Christ looked not to His own, nor gave precedence to self or to the glory of the Godhead which was His, but emptied Himself for our sake, and by the Spirit of love laid hold on man's nature. In consequence of this self-renunciation and self-abasement, God "hath highly exalted Him" to be the firstborn among many brethren, and has given Him in our nature the glory which He "had before the world was." Man by sin had claimed himself as his own; hence, in order to be saved, he must go out of self, and empty himself, to be filled with Christ, so as to become "an inheritance of God in Christ." This is possible for the sinner by the Cross only, through which the Spirit enables him to deny himself and to die unto sin. In the Cross he meets that saving love of God by the Spirit which works the death of the old self.

"Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords with might:
Smote the chord of self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight."

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[1] Hooker.

Man also beholds his own ideal in Christ clothed in transcendent glory; and, "counting all things to be loss for the excellency of Jesus Christ," he suffers the loss of all he once considered to be gain, in order to appropriate Christ, and thus discarding self receives in place of self the glorified Christ.

The Spirit enables man by faith to receive the Son, and to give himself in the receiving. God gave so that He received, and man receives so that he gives. God gave and still had what He gave; man by faith gives himself, and by the giving possesses himself in Christ. God's gifts are all given in such a way that He still possesses what He gives. "He confers the gifts of His providence upon man, and yet 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' The Father gave all to the Son, and all that was so given was no less the Father's when given, but more perfectly so."[1] Man by receiving Christ is incomparably more his own than he could otherwise ever be even in imagination. Man's own personality is enriched by salvation, for Christ calls "His own sheep by name," each by his own distinct personality, in which the call resounds, so that each knows that He calls him. The salvation presented to each believer is peculiarly fitted to meet his own particular case. "*I* live; and yet no longer *I*, but Christ liveth in *me*, . . . who loved *me*, and gave Himself up for *me*."

The Saviour being the Son, the believer united by faith to Him becomes a child of God, so that "to believe" and "to be a child of God," or "to be begotten of God," are interchangeable expressions. "For ye are all sons of God through faith, in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26), and "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God" (1 John v. 1). The believer enters into the status of a child and receives the right of sonship. The Spirit who forms the union dwells in it as the Spirit of the Son. In receiving the adoption of sons, man receives a new self, which is full of dignity and majesty, and henceforth rejoices in the hope of the glory of God. The seed of God abides in the faith, and this means, as Calvin states, "an embracing of Christ in the heart."

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[1] Rev. D. C. Davies.

The risen Christ does not stand alone, because He has the Holy Spirit as His own, and by that Spirit imparts the incorruptible seed of the Word, and this endowment is "the perfect law, the law of liberty." Faith in the Son of the living God is the rock on which the Church is built. Christ maketh alive from age to age, so that the powers of death "shall not prevail," for "whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." The sole command of the Gospel is to believe in Christ. Therefore when we first meet with the words "faith" and "spirit" in the epistles of John, they express the sole moral condition of fellowship and certain knowledge. "This is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another" (1 John iii. 23). The "name" is the Person as revealed in power, and faith takes hold of Him both in His majesty as *Son*, and in His condescension as *Jesus Christ.* This is the "law of faith," whose one commandment enjoins entrance into fellowship with the Saviour. In this fellowship the heart, perceiving the Eternal Love that gave the Son, grows tender towards men. By embracing Christ faith grasps the truth which centres in Him, and becomes the source of all true vital knowledge, and its experience is a test of the truth which is objectively presented to it. Through confession of the incarnate Son, and the consequent imparting of out-flowing love by the Holy Spirit, certain knowledge of fellowship with God is attained: "Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He gave us" (1 John iii. 24). Faith and knowledge become one, for true knowledge of God has certainty in its highest form. The science of faith satisfies Aristotle's *criteria* of true knowledge. It has universality, it is removed from sense, and provides ultimate and certain causes of all things, is independent of all things as caused, and rules all other sciences as their principle.

Faith, being a dying to self and to the law, can have no merit in itself, for the very possibility of faith involves the denial of all merit, since merit is based upon some excellency in self. On the contrary, the value of faith depends solely upon its object. Were it not so, other virtues would have had the preference over faith in salvation, as they always have in the estimation of the world. Faith is an act of justice towards Christ; it is His due, and He is worshipped by it. But an act of justice has no merit: to pay what one owes is not considered to be meritorious. In merit there is no "door of faith," and any consciousness of it is antagonistic to grace. Faith never exists except when man turns his eye from himself and comes to Christ for salvation, denying every excellency in himself, and trusting wholly in Christ.

By faith Christ becomes the life-principle working in man, whose eye and heart are to be wholly concentrated upon Him. To possess Him and to be found in Him are the entire aim and hope of man. Morality is not attainable by making it the aim, for it is not the outward character that is to be first considered in morals, but the person. The means considered most efficacious in regulating conduct often do but little to connect us with the moral ends to be secured; and to keep the eye steadily on the end to be attained may become the greatest hindrance to gaining it. Christ is to be all in all for man, and moral excellence comes by setting the heart on Christ. Moral renovation comes through the hidden resurrection-life of Christ which issues in newness of life. Joy is found in duty, pleasure in righteousness. Blessedness is brought by faith, whereby Christ is formed within and the Spirit changes man into His image "from glory to glory." All motives for a holy life are treasured up in Christ. Forgiveness and grace are mightier motives to goodness than all human moral sanctions. The objective excellency perceived by faith becomes the subjective possession of the believer, and the life so received serves God, for "as it lives it lives to God." Gifts have no power to change man, for all gifts have influence only as they manifest love. Apart from the person of the giver, a gift has only a utilitarian value. Love cannot be bought except by love. The Spirit gives a sense of the divine love, the effect of which is the consciousness of being loved. This engenders thankfulness—a grace in man that answers to grace in God, and issues out of the same life as from affinity of kinship.

Thus faith becomes the fount of all graces, "the joyful mother of children," and stands among them a queen among princesses, a king's daughter "all-glorious within" (Ps. xlv. 13). Forgetting her own people and her father's house, she enters the royal palace, and her companions follow her. The Spirit who wrought the union will carry on the work, revealing and upholding it by His word of power, "from faith to faith." Resting on God, faith is ever strong, for "the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might He increaseth strength."

All comes through the one grace of faith which works through the one love,—the love that gave the Son, the love that left all to save man, the love of the Spirit who works faith in him, the love which is the Spirit, and therefore the love by which the faith itself works. Being loved, and knowing it by the Spirit, man loves in return, and presses onward to perfection with the patience of hope, resting on the promises that "they shall not depart from me," and "I will not turn away from them to do them good" (Jer. xxxii. 40).

The intercession of Christ in heaven is for the sons of God, and is based upon faith—the grace of sonship. When praying for His disciple, He prayed that his "faith fail not" (Luke xxii. 32). The Advocate in heaven intercedes with God the Father (1 John ii. 1), and for His children. Intercession is an appeal to divine love, the effect of which is the continuance of the power of the Holy Spirit in believers, upholding their faith. In chapter xvii. 9 Jesus prays for His disciples, saying, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world." Christ sends the Spirit to the world to produce faith, and believers in the love of the Spirit pray that the world may be saved. Yet the intercession is made only for those who believe; therefore He says again, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on Me through their word" (ver. 20). This affirms that faith is the condition of being included in the intercession. The Spirit also intercedes *in* those *for* whom the Son intercedes in heaven. Faith is thus the great principle of harmony, after which, for the increase of which and on account of which intercession is made. It is the privilege and the sign of sonship, the condition of all heavenly blessings now and for ever, and the operation and the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit in man, which correspond to the nature of the perfect salvation in Christ the Lord.

IX.

THE SPIRIT AND ETERNAL LIFE.

THE new life born of the Spirit is called "eternal life." To be "born of the Spirit" in the first part of the discourse with Nicodemus corresponds with "eternal life" in John iii. 16. When so called the life is considered in its divine aspect, as the aggregate or sum of all divine powers with which the new man is equipped. The believer now possesses in germ all that in full fruition he will attain to by the coming of the kingdom. To possess this life is the same as to possess the Spirit, its fount and the pledge of its fulness; so that the life itself is an index of the indwelling Spirit, because of, and after the manner of, His dwelling in Christ incarnate. It is what is elsewhere called "the kingdom of God" in its essential divine aspect. The intercessory prayer of our Lord is based upon the commission given to Christ to confer this life, while its growth and full development are the objects of the prayer. "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send" (John xvii. 3). To know God and Jesus Christ is to participate by a life communion in a progressive knowledge that issues from the life, and this communion is also its object, and is ever sustained by it. The motive and end of communion lie in the life itself; and the verse points out its nature, its means and its purpose, showing it to be self-dependent in him who has it, life in himself (John vi. 53). By it God reveals Himself as the source of all that is eternal—the only true God, in conjunction and in harmony with the revelation in Jesus Christ, who historically declared Him, and by whom the divine life in its infinite abundance is communicated to man, for the life was in the Word with the Father. It contains the revelation of the Son and the Father, and conveys those blessings which that relation in the Trinity signifies, and which the fellowship of the Spirit gives to a believer as a son and heir of God. Being eternal it is divine, and possesses in itself that which is real and passeth not away, to which the idea of sequence in time is not applicable, for in itself it is neither in time nor place. This life manifested in Christ is by His death made victorious in the world over sin and death. As it exists only in heavenly places, and is ever directed towards the Father, he who has the life is in heavenly places, and has fellowship with the Father and the Son.

All life belonging to time and place is dissoluble, according to the conditions of all creatures; whereas the eternal life is indissoluble, "after the power of an endless life." All other life is dependent; this life is dependent only on itself, ever producing and sustaining the characteristics of personality as a spiritual existence. In 1 John i. 1-7 "eternal life" is represented as the distinctive personal character of the Word, and it is said to be with the Father, that is, the Fatherhood of God is its end and law. All life is a movement towards some end, and every personal life strives to grow by communication with other personalities, giving and assimilating, so that its song is, "My beloved is Mine, and I am His." This divine life exalts personality, imparting sacredness even to extraneous things which stand in any relation to its possessor. Sin, on the contrary, defiling what it dwells in, debases personality.

This life, essentially divine and indissoluble, is endowed with the power which cleanses from guilt: "the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). His blood is His undying life, which, offered up through the Eternal Spirit, became "death to death, destruction to destruction." Thereby the man Christ Jesus, who is also the exalted Son, removes all hindrance to fellowship. This sacrificial efficacy to destroy sin is the power of His life in the light of revelation. It is by the instrumentality of the Word, illuminated by the Spirit, that forgiveness is granted and guilt is covered. All believers testify that they become possessed of strength and vigour when new life is imparted to them through the Word, the light of which arises upon them as a "sun with healing in his wings." He comes to them as the dawn of a summer day, when the mountain-tops are touched with the glow of the morning sun, which as it ascends gradually bathes them all in its golden light. This colour may fade away as the day advances, to appear again in the evening as the sign of fair weather on the morrow. The light of life in Christ Jesus arises, cleansing the conscience by the power of its beams, and covering man wholly with the scarlet robe of righteousness, which sin can never defile. Tennyson describes how the Holy Grail glided down a beam of light:

> "And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,
> Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive."

So salvation comes to man when he is first forgiven; and again at eventide the heavens become all ruddy—a promise of a bright and fine to-morrow.

In chapter vi. Jesus explains how He, the Son of man, by His words is the source and the sustainer of this life. He is the bread of life from heaven—the living bread, which imparts and sustains life, the staff of life, so that eating His flesh gives eternal life. All this sounded strange to Jewish ears, although eating what was offered in sacrifice was common enough. The flesh was what the Word became, and the "words" of Christ were a manifestation of the divine life in the flesh. But the revelation was not by word of mouth alone, but also by what He was in life and character. The Spirit given Him as Son of man searched the deep things of God within Him, and these again were revealed by Him in words. These words belonged to the divine sphere, and were the expression of what Christ Himself was. Being the product of the Spirit in Christ, they became the seed of a divine and incorruptible life. He who thus revealed himself had to die a sacrificial death before the revelation could be received by men. Christ had first to be lifted up in shame on the Cross, till His enemies could no longer see Him. He had also to ascend so that the eyes of His disciples could not behold Him. These two ascensions, combining shame and glory, gave the revelation in the flesh its incomparable spiritual efficacy. His words are a form of His Spirit incarnate, the living seed of eternal life. As seed they strike down roots into sinful ground, and entwine around the works of the Evil One, overpowering and destroying sin while quickening all good into a new and glorious growth. By the words, which are spirit and life, men are enabled to enter into the closest fellowship with God. Christ is in believers as in a temple where

He is revealed in glory by the Spirit, and believers are in Christ as living members of the living Word. Christ lives "because of the Father,"—He lives unto the Father as the object of His life; believers live "because of Me," and they also live unto Him.

The power of "blood" in the sacrifice corresponds to the cleansing, quickening, and invigorating element in the light; so that when it enters where sin is dominant, it destroys the sin, and with sin death. Therefore, eternal life is supreme over all because it is essentially divine in its nature. The higher life, when in conflict with a lower, must ultimately prevail. Between animal life and man's life of reason and intellect there has been a long-drawn conflict, yet it is certain that all creatures must either serve man or become extinct. What takes not his yoke upon it must perish. It seems strange that spiritual life is placed by the Heavenly Father, in the first instance, amidst enemies. But a world full of difficulties and inimical forces is the only proper ground for this life to take root in. A sinful world is the nursery of the trees of the Lord, which are full of sap, and have their roots intertwined around that which appears to be destructive to their growth. This life proves itself more than victorious, for it appropriates all things unto itself; for "all are yours"—death as well as life (1 Cor. iii. 22). "Who can be against us?" asks the Apostle Paul. All that oppose us are under the divine authority, which is the source of their power, for "in all these things we are more than conquerors" (Rom. viii. 31-39). Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Eternal justice has justified them. Who shall condemn them? The supreme Judge is their righteousness. No condemnation can come from the deep, for Christ died. None can come from the world of spiritual forces, for He is risen. None can come from the throne, for He intercedes in heaven for us. Those who are the beloved of God and love Him are on the vantage-ground, where "all things work together for good," and bring to pass the perfect consummation of eternal life in the Messianic kingdom.

Saints striving to attain this end are exhorted to become in fact what they are by right, so as joyfully to possess the inheritance that pertains to the divine life which is theirs. What is divine in character is divine in content—in height, depth, and breadth—and passes knowledge, pressing onwards towards its own goal as a life that was eternally with the Father, and whose deepest aspirations must be Godward, for it strives to "be filled unto all the fulness of God." As a life in God, it is a present reality; as a life to be hereafter realised, it comes under the human conditions of progress—an ideal that is to become a possession by trustful obedience.

This life is of a saving nature; its activity of love is sufficient proof of our own salvation. For "we know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren" (1 John iii. 11). Its saving nature looks beyond the circle of believers. It has in it the very impulse of salvation. It is the Saviour within us, so that it loves the brethren with a saving love. It is a love of complacency towards those who are born of God, so that to delight in God is the same as to delight in them who are born of God. As it is the life of saving love, "if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John iv. 11), for the power and the nature of the life are the same in man as in God. The life is an inward witness of the Father to His sons by the Holy Spirit; "and the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John v. 11). It never springs up in man except when he is in union with the Son; for it is no human virtue, such as benevolence or philanthropy, though it gives to all natural virtues a great impetus not otherwise obtainable. By its nature as a life in the Son it has an inherent power to save others from their sin. Rising from an altar, it builds an altar wheresoever it alights. Being the life of the Son, it partakes of the mission of the Son, and he who possesses it has in himself an authority to lay down his physical life for the brethren. These are they that overcame the accuser, "because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death" (Rev. xii. 11). Possessing the power of laying down their life in the Son, believers do so with a certain hope of receiving it again. They die by faith as they lived by faith, and their immortality is grounded on the twofold fact that the life itself is indissoluble, and that it has in it the saving virtue that overcomes death through the resurrection and the life of Him who died on their behalf. The indwelling Spirit in eternal life is therefore immortality.

The doctrine of immortality meets a universal need in man, which is inherent in his nature, so that he cannot realise his own non-existence, or a state where his identity is lost. It is given as an element of his self-consciousness, a wistful dream which may take many strange forms. Eternity lies in man's nature; and scepticism, although able to smother the truth in the intellect, cannot cast it out of the heart. When the doctrine is revealed and acknowledged by men of carnal thoughts, immortality takes a material form, negatively as the absence of all troubles, positively as an abundance of material benefits. Man's idea of immortality is a fair test of his spirituality. Plato's oft-quoted saying is the highest expression of the doctrine outside Christianity: "Man ought to choose out the best and most irrefragable of human opinions about it; and upon that, like a mariner on a raft, risk his way through the storm of life, unless he can make the journey more easily and with less peril on the more sure vessel of some divine word." The needed Word has been given, and this eternal life realises the unity of the present and the future. It looks onward, all along the line, and sees not death, nor is it conscious of a break, for believers are now come unto Mount Zion and "to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn" (Heb. xii. 22).

The illumination of the future state through Christ and His Spirit has wrought the most patent change in the state of believers. As Israel did not possess the Holy Spirit, it could not attain to a clear view of the doctrine of immortality; and the earthly national form of their religion, founded as it was upon providential rewards and punishments, was not favourable to the full revelation of the doctrine. If it had been revealed to the nation in its early state it would have yielded itself easily to ethnic idolatrous views, and heathen rites would have had a better opportunity of prevailing in Israel. Even under the New Dispensation the doctrine has been abused by Mohammedans and Roman Catholics, materialised by the one, and laid hold of for sacerdotal and priestly ends by the other. As the danger from idolatry grew less in Israel, the doctrine began to appear, and its light and hope became stronger amidst the sorrows of the decline of the national life. Their ideal of the Messianic kingdom was earthly, and the doctrine of resurrection and immortality took the form of an expectation that the righteous dead would not be debarred from the coming glory, but would arise and partake of it. Our tendency is to separate the kingdom of God from the earth, as if the earth must be left outside the kingdom; while the intimations are many that immortality has a relation to our world, and that the difficulty of eternal blessedness is not one of place or time. The region of the dead was to Israel the region of impotent shades. No true view of death could have been communicated to man before the death of Christ and the coming of the Spirit. In Christ, life and immortality in incorruption stood revealed, and a great light shone through the darkness. Death became a passage along which the light of a great divine purpose shines, pointing the way to the Father.

The doctrine, as far as it was revealed in Israel, was an outgrowth of the doctrine of God, whose unchangeable and eternal nature gave an eternal value to His covenant relation, and whose moral perfection cast a light upon its nature. The moral sanctions to righteousness in the present life had to precede the thought of retribution in a future life. The psalmists and teachers of old rejoiced that the covenant secured the continuance of the nation. In the grand march of all creatures past the throne the truth that "Thou art the same" gave the certainty that "the children of Thy servants shall continue" (Ps. cii. 28). They looked back to primeval longevity, and saw it in the future "as a life for ever and ever." A psalmist calls his soul his "glory,"—his *spirit* or his *heart* in active manifestation, shining forth in fulness of power (Ps. xvi.). The Lord was his inheritance, giving him the sure hope that "Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol." If the soul, his glory, rejoiced in fulness of life, this gave the assured hope that "my flesh also shall dwell in safety." However it may be explained, God's favour to the Psalmist is said to reach the body, and to save man as a whole. Philo calls man so favoured a Jacob's ladder, along which the heavenly messages in intercommunion incessantly pass up and down, while the highest link safeguards the welfare of the lowest. In Job xix. 25 we have an example of the power of sorrow to clear the eye. A sudden glory, as sunshine after rain, and a vivid vision of immortality opens before him. In Daniel xii. 2, 3, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body comes into view in its full significance, including "everlasting life" and "everlasting contempt." Yet future existence was evanescent and shadowy until the risen Christ flooded it with a great light in the gift of eternal life.

Eternal life, by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the regenerate, confers immortality of soul and body. The resurrection of Christ is the great event upon which salvation is said to depend. In it salvation is seen to be a life so full that it claims the whole man, whose nature is thereby endowed with endless spiritual possibilities. The power of resurrection is ascribed to the life possessed in the present, so that the "last day" will be but the culmination of life. The present state is seedtime; the harvest lies in the future. Christ Himself in the flesh was as a grain of wheat, which, by the death of what outwardly belongs to it, enters into a fuller and richer existence. Through death the isolation of the seed is changed into a power that "beareth much fruit." Christ's resurrection included within it the resurrection of all that are His. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians xv. 42-49, looks upon the present life, through its entire course, as a sowing preparatory to a higher life. The life of the resurrection lies hidden in it, in corruption, dishonour and weakness, to be raised in incorruption, glory, power and spirituality, and wholly transfigured by the Spirit.

The body of Christ was adapted for the Lord, as the Lord was for His body. It was, in fact, the very temple of His personality, wherein the glory of "the only begotten from the Father" was beheld, and this glory was the power of the Spirit and the source of the glory of the resurrection. The body in each believer also is the garment of his personality and the temple of the Lord. According to the law of service the body as a servant has its place where the Spirit, its master, is. "The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor. vi. 13). His sovereignty demands it, and the servant calls for his King. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit," a united personality in heavenly places.

In John vi. "I will raise him at the last day" is repeated more than once. It is presented in the first instance as the will of the Father, that nothing should be lost of all that which had been given to the Son, but that Christ should raise it up as a whole at the last day (ver. 39), and the Son knew "that His commandment is life eternal" (xii. 50). The Father's will is fulfilled when He draweth man so that he "beholdeth the Son and believeth on Him"; at which point faith confers eternal life, and ensures that "I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 40). In verse 44 all the saving work of the Father is stated to be a mighty drawing to the Son; and all the work of the Son is summed up in the resurrection, "in the last day." Finally, in verse 54, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man give eternal life; a participation in Christ as Spirit and life gives a community of nature which, serving as the requisite for the transmission of mighty spiritual powers, constitutes the reason why "I will raise him up at the last." Because of the indwelling of the Spirit, and inasmuch as where He dwells Christ dwells also by Him, it follows that God "shall quicken also your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11). The same reason exists for the resurrection of the regenerate as for the resurrection of Jesus Himself, and this reason is stated to be the indwelling Spirit.

In chapter v. 20-29 a still more comprehensive view of life and the resurrection is given. Jesus states that greater works than the miracles, greater in nature, would be shown Him by the Father. For as the Father raised the dead and quickened them,—two divine acts which are not the same,—so the Son, in like manner and by the same identical act, could "*quicken* whom He will." All judgment or separation—judgment in all its forms—is given unto the Son, so that there is no judgment of the Father which is not executed by the Son. The divine power of quickening, which the Son has, includes the sovereignty of the Father, and the power of judgment lies within it as the power of life and death. Because the words of Jesus are spirit and life they also are said to judge men. The absolute sovereignty of the Son is the same as that of the Father, so that the reverence due to the Father is also His. The quickening, which is salvation, bears a relation to judgment, inasmuch as he who hears and believes "cometh not into judgment." Passing out of death into life, which is the quickening, is the end of judgment. The new life is a present resurrection; and the dead that hear the voice, that is, the Spirit, shall live. This contains a great marvel. The Father gave to the Son "to have life in Himself"—that is, He gave Him the Spirit; "and gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man."

The Redeemer and the Judge must be one and the same, acting by one and the same spirit, and His resurrection from the dead is the proof that Jesus is both. Salvation and judgment are so intertwined that they cannot be separated, being two aspects of one power. By man God saves, and by man He judges: both are functions of the Son of man. The Second Man from heaven bears a relation to the whole human race: the race, therefore, and every individual of it, must have a relation to the Man Christ Jesus. Therefore, as the Father raiseth the dead, so also the Son of man raiseth the dead, with the result that "all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth," some unto the resurrection of life, and some unto the resurrection of judgment. The quickening carries with it the necessity of the resurrection—to life in the one instance, and to judgment in the other. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind"; so that all must appear and become exposed to view in the light of the throne of the Son of man.

When the consummation has been attained, what then? "Who is so ignorant of the things purposed of God for the worthy, as not to know that the crown of the righteous is the Spirit in a more abundant measure of spiritual glory bestowed as 'My glory'?" [1]

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[1] Basil, xvi. 40.

X.

JUDGMENT BY THE SPIRIT.

JOHN iii. 17-21.

REGENERATION divides the world. God loved the world, reconciling it to Himself in Christ; and as a token of proffered favour He "spreads out His hands all day." It remains that man should reach forth his hands in response; and his free choice determines the alternative of peace or wrath to be evolved through his attitude towards the Spirit of Christ. By receiving the revelation, man experiences a process of coming into the light; by refusing it, a process of withdrawal into darkness. In either case, by salvation or by judgment, the only begotten Son, by His Spirit, is the absolute arbiter of his destiny. The law of the process is, "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath" (Mark iv. 22-25). This "having" implies active possession; for the mere presence of an object does not make it one's own. Each person appropriates it by the will. The Spirit, as the kingly might of the Saviour, by this law reveals what is in man, for "there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested; neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light." Man has a mysterious moral root hidden in his nature which must be disclosed by spiritual influences; there may also lie in him something "made secret," sown by the Spirit of God as a seed, which, when quickened, may issue forth in the blade, the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. Man comes face to face with his absolute sovereign in Christ, so that what he presents to Him, whether in the way of faith or of unbelief, will be filled up and consummated either by life eternal or by final judgment. In the one case, more shall be given; in the other, even that which he hath shall be taken away. Therefore our Lord, by the Spirit, divides the world, evoking the hidden spiritual germ in all, so that men stand disclosed in their inmost nature to the eyes of all.

Jesus Christ as Redeemer and Judge claimed kingly authority. Rejecting worldly dominion, He proclaimed His kingdom to be one of absolute moral truth, the expression in thought and power of the effulgence of His Spirit,—a spiritual kingdom, and therefore one to be spiritually discerned. By the Spirit Jesus winnows mankind, revealing the division that is inherent alike in the race and in the individual. He had, as Son, received life in Himself (John v. 26), which life was the Spirit, to save and to quicken whom He willed. His will was one with the Father's, so that as the Father willed so did the Son. In the days of His flesh His mission was to do His Father's will. Though appearing "in the form of a servant," He spake by the Spirit words which were words of divine judgment, thus fulfilling the idea of kingship in Israel. Now that He is exalted on the right hand of majesty, He gives gifts to men as He dispenses to them the Spirit. His saving power necessitates also the authority of a judge, "for all judgment is given unto the Son," by whom alone the Father judges. The divine majesty appears in the giving of salvation, and shines forth when Christ receives all authority in heaven and on earth over life and death, to forgive and to condemn. He was risen from the dead a Prince and a royal Saviour, whose life and breath is the Spirit. The term "Living God" denotes God as the Creator and Governor of all, and therefore as the Judge of all. Jesus lived by the "Living Father," equal with Him in power, and co-extensive in His dominion. His kingdom effects in the world the separation preparatory to the Day of Judgment, before which "the Gospel must first be preached unto all the nations." He Himself is above judgment, for He is our righteousness, the perfect standard in Sonship to which men are to be conformed; and He, who is the perfect measure of man, is man's Judge. It was becoming that the office of judge should belong to a son of man, and He is the *man* ordained to be Judge (Acts xvii. 31), the Son of man, to whom belongs the office of a king, the God-man. Man's relation to Christ, therefore, is henceforth man's whole relation to God. All humanity is gathered up in Him who is the Head of the race, and all God's purposes are vested in the Saviour. For bliss or woe, life or death, all depends on our relation to Him. Man may turn salvation into condemnation, the light into darkness, so that divine love is turned into wrath to be revealed as "the wrath of the Lamb"; and even now "he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

The prophets had intimately joined together salvation and judgment. Where we meet with a great vision of the coming blessing we hear the roll of thunder ere the heavens pour down righteousness. Zion was to be redeemed by judgment,—by the Spirit as a blast of burning (Isa. i. 27,

iv. 4). The great prophecy fulfilled on Pentecost soon leads inevitably to the terrors of "the notable day of the Lord." Jesus says, in verse 17, that the Son was sent "that the world should be saved through Him." He who believeth on Him is not judged, because in the mission itself there is no judgment. The believer's true self becomes one with Christ, in whom there is no condemnation. Sin has no root in the man whose true self is Christ. The power of sin to condemn is paralysed when the old self is crucified with Christ. In the myth of Hercules it is stated that a giant thrown down repeatedly sprang up refreshed. Being a son of the earth, contact with it gave him renewed vigour. The hero had to hold him aloft in order to obtain complete victory. No casting down of sin can crush its power; it must be severed from self. And when man is united to Christ, the severance is effected, sin is seen to be crucified with Him and condemned to be utterly cast out.

Unbelief, on the other hand, is self-separation from Christ. This judgment has its foundation in man's will, its proof in his unbelief, its occasion in the revelation in Christ, and its form in the redemption there offered. Its essence is stated to be that the light, the true light, the light that issues from life and is spirit, "is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light." This light is not a reflected light, but one that distinguishes and separates, the equivalents of which are life and spirit.

The ground of unbelief is stated to be moral, an active self-direction of the will as the conscious centre of personality. Man cannot stand alone, for where God's Spirit is not permitted to act, the evil spirit will surely act. His works in men are said to be *evil*, and thus evince their spiritual nature as embodying the principle of evil. "He therefore who committeth sin is a servant of sin." Sin in these words is almost personified, the sinner betraying the service in which he is by his works; and these works are revealed in their true character by "the light." "Every one that doeth ill hateth the light," because it shows the works to be, in their spirit, vanity, mere futile, negative activity. The emotions of the heart are depraved, so that man loves darkness *rather* than light, and the will in choosing darkness determines the character. There may be admiration of Christ when His light is first presented. Direct antipathy to Jesus had not as yet appeared in Israel. In chapter ix. 39 the process of separation had attained a penal character. Self rose in its own defence, suggesting reasons for deprecating salvation. Man hates self-condemnation. The light is painful, and the stronger the light the more painful it becomes. Where there is light and the eye is blind, Christ can open the eye. Where the eye is diseased, it sees all in distorted and grotesque forms, and in such a case the light has become darkness, a lying spirit. The moral reason becomes active in vanity; and the intellectual powers become beclouded and estranged from the life of God through the deadening of the moral sense. To defend their conduct, men shroud it in a deeper spiritual gloom, retiring further into darkness. Yet they carry with them the vision seen, and what they shun follows them; for truth once seen never quite deserts the conscience. The lovely visage of truth haunts the mind, and is apt to obtrude itself when least expected. Truth has personal rights, and it is worthy of all acceptation. When held down in unrighteousness it will be avenged in a resurrection by the Spirit of truth. Man, who was intended to be a temple of the living God, may become the sepulchre of His murdered witnesses, who, by the breath of the Spirit, will rise again to convict him (Rev. xi. 11). Even they who deny "the Master that bought them" are ruled by Him, for where the Gospel comes man cannot escape it. Men must acknowledge Christ. Thought must crown Him, were it only with a crown of thorns; power must place a sceptre in His hand, were it but a reed of scorn; and where He is crucified afresh it is seen written over His cross that He is a King.

At first man is not wholly on the side either of the natural or of the spiritual. He recognises the nobility of the heavenly, yet its form seems to him to be utter folly, because its reasonableness is hidden by its own nature, as well as by the fact that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels." When the spiritual grows more intense, the opposition of the natural, psychical life waxes stronger, exerting itself often most strongly, "kicking against the goad," when grace is on the eve of overcoming it. Here man's strength is his weakness, and his fall is his strength. The severest conflict often lies not between what is clearly immoral and the moral, but between the relatively good on the one hand, which is naturally gratifying, present, practical and apparently substantial, and the spiritual, on the other hand, which seems vague and subversive of what is naturally good. The relatively good may not be in itself sinful, for a Christian man may value it even when he counts it loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Jesus appeared to be undermining the whole fabric of Jewish society, and men saw not the glory of that which He promised. He commanded men to leave their dearest and best, and follow Him; to carry their most beloved object up the mount to the altar, promising that they should come down possessing the very same in a far higher manner. Whosoever leaves these, whether they be persons or goods, "shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, . . . with *persecutions*; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark x. 30). Even partakers of the Holy Spirit may think that these natural blessings need not be given up: hence the struggle involved ever becomes the test of character, creating strife and division in the soul. Yielding to the lower instincts, man becomes a part of the storm that beats upon him. He is tossed and wrecked by it, and becomes a source of danger to others. The influence of the world, the besetting sin, the visible that is valued, soon become the means by which the old man pursues his old ends in the guise of the new man. The relative good must yield to the absolute good, and the kingdom must be sought first and alone.

Separation from, and coming to, the light proceed by the same means. By seeking those given Him by the Father, Jesus gave the Jews occasion of murderous hatred. The training of the disciples for their great task was the ripening of Judas to be the son of perdition. The good and the bad developed under the same conditions; they heard the same words, saw the same works, observed the same character. The present tenses in the passage we are dealing with describe the process as continuous. Like a fissure in a glacier, the cleavage, which at the first seemed but a line a child could step over, becomes wider and deeper, until it remains "a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us." Transit from one side to the other becomes impossible. None could ascend to heaven before, henceforth none can pass from heaven on a mission of love.

This revulsion of the evil heart is that sin against the Holy Spirit which, turning salvation into judgment, excludes the transgressor from all the forgiving virtue of the Saviour. This whole process of unbelief partakes of the final penal character of the sin, though the judgment involved in it may have many grades and may pass through various aspects before it is seen to have made forgiveness impossible. Jesus teaches that the longsuffering of God has its limits. Man may cause the forbearance that affords a respite to become the source of peril, changing salvation itself into judgment. The sin of the unbelieving Jews, and of Judas among the disciples, is clearly seen to be so when their hardness of heart brought upon them swift destruction. Where the Spirit of grace that enables man to receive salvation is grieved by the turning of His inward operations into incentives of malignity towards the Gospel, transforming the means of grace into the means of self-destruction, there God finally abandons the sinner to judgment.

If it be asked what this sin is definitely, it can only be answered that it is deliberate unbelief, a life of sin culminating in taking from man even what he thinks he has. In fact, the sin itself is nothing else than the act by which the sinner turns the light that is in him into darkness, and is incomprehensible because of the blackness of darkness which rests upon it. The assumption of an endless possibility of moral change has no foundation in the teaching of our Lord. He Himself had "a day" to work, which, if lost, would be irredeemable. By this experience He saw and taught that man also had his day of grace, which, once past, could never be recalled. The material of bliss and of woe is the one salvation which is offered, and the one agent in both cases is the Spirit of Christ, His breath and the might of His presence.

In contrast with this withdrawal into darkness there is also a coming into the light of that secret thing which God had by the Spirit hidden in man. Christ teaches that the active working of divine grace and the earnest application of the will to righteousness are mutually dependent. Each factor is indispensable to salvation, which in itself is both divine and human in its entire growth. The divine side is not a reward for what man has previously done, neither does the earnest activity on the part of either man or the Spirit invalidate that of the other, but both are concurrent and essentially necessary to the result of implicit obedience to the will of God. Christ teaches that men have something from God ere they come to Him, and this prerequisite all men ought to possess.

This secret thing is something that hears and learns of the Father and attracts to Christ. It has a spiritual instinct to hear His voice and to see His form (John v. 37). Hearing the accustomed authoritative voice of conscience, and seeing the form of the divine moral perfection, human hearts are attentive. The tiny rootlets deeply embedded in the soil feel the influence of the ascending sun in spring, when men are not yet conscious of any change. They hear a call, and in response they shoot tender sprouts straight in the direction of the light; then, face to face with the great orb of life of which they had a kind of intuition, they from their bed of earth bud and expand into the full beauty of flower and fruit. So the hidden secret of God in man strives for the light, craving for the power of manifestation in joyful activity to walk in the light, and therefore after the Spirit, unto life eternal.

It is he that doeth the truth who cometh unto the light. The truth is so nearly allied to righteousness that they are but two aspects of the same thing. Truth is righteousness in power, a correspondence in thought and act with what is divinely real, the harmony of man with himself, because he is in accord with God, who is the source of his personal life. By the truth man is made morally right in heart, and by doing the truth he confesses it in act, and thereby reveals his character to be from God. What he had of light implies the need for more—a coming unto the light.

St. Paul gives an autobiographical description of his own coming to the light in Romans vii. 7-25. As a child he was naturally free. As a youth he heard the voice of that law by which he knew sin—that is, experienced it; and he saw that sin was inborn in himself. The command against lust lent fascination to the object, so that sin, roused into activity by the law, secured a vantage-ground in the very commandment: "for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me" (ver. 11). The law itself is holy and spiritual, being the perfect love of good—goodness and will in unity. What the law aims at, but cannot do in the flesh, is fulfilled by the Spirit of Christ.

There arose, in the Apostle's experience, what arises in the experience of all men more or less,—the sense of a double consciousness, a man within a man, one belonging to the sphere of law, the other to that of sin. One self was carnal, the other self had a spiritual craving for light. The great duality that existed in the race appears as a duality in each individual, the one leading to Christ, the other to unbelief. Ancient philosophers were conscious of this fact, and accounted for it by teaching that man had two souls: one was the universal soul represented by reason and conscience, which laid hold on universal truth and goodness; the other was represented by the flesh in the individual man. They also taught that the higher could sink into the lower, carrying its ideals along with it, creating moral monstrosities, grotesque forms and illusions. They looked upon morality as consisting in the subjection of the individual self to the universal, the animal man to the rational man. Thereby was evolved a high order of moral life which studied the general welfare and attained great natural excellency. The Gospel presents us with a higher order still—the spiritual, which could not be realised until man was redeemed. The lines of demarcation between the animal life and the rational life cannot be definitely fixed, yet the difference is plain. The lines that separate the rational self—that of reason, moral prudence and general benevolence—from the spiritual cannot be definitely traced; yet there is a marked difference between these also.

This double consciousness was accentuated in the case of the Apostle, and during the struggle he identified his better self with the law, while yet conscious of his spiritual inability to conform his life to it. He uses present tenses to express vividly the inward experience of his state when sin was his master, his better self a captive sold under the power of sin. To himself he was incomprehensible, for it was the indwelling Spirit of Christ alone that could explain to him his own strange, complex personality. He was a field of battle where mighty forces had met—forces which had their seat in his own nature, he himself being the prize for which they fought. What he approved he could not perform: "that which I do I know not." What he does he dislikes; he himself condemned his own life, for it was not the spontaneous moral result of his better self. He himself was against himself, and still the responsible agent. To will was within his power, yet he could not translate the spiritual impulse into an act. Sin dwelt in him and held him as its slave, and he was therefore not a son free in his own house. He found within him a governing principle, that when he was inclined to do good, evil was present to hinder him. His inward man, the higher self, delighted in the law of God, which spake and strove to act as the law of his mind. The "mind" is the highest moral faculty in the natural man, although it is far below that faculty which is born of the Spirit, has communion with a personal God, and is free by redemption. The natural mind is lifeless; the Spirit alone is life. The experience of the Apostle thus was that four mighty powers were contending within him—a spiritual law and the law of the mind, the law of sin and the law of the members. St. Paul was a captive in his own city, the ramparts were occupied by the enemy, the gates were barred by the law, and the power in his members, as the servants of sin, carried him away captive. What means this contention of forces struggling to the birth? Can it be prophetic? The answer is soon supplied. The Gospel comes, the bars of his prison fall of themselves, and he finds himself free. A breath of life passed over him. God said, "Let there be light," and light shone out of the darkness; he sprang to his feet and walked in the light. A law, a power of life, dwells in his will and fulfils the law by the Spirit. "Fulfilling the law" is an expression used by the Apostle, chiefly when he refers to duties towards his neighbour. As explained in Romans xiii. 8-10, the life of love is, in the first instance, the sure pledge of justice, the one duty which man owes. In verse 9 it is the summing up of all duties in one spiritual principle; in verse 10 it is a positive power that keeps at a distance the possibility of doing harm.

The regenerate man, living by the Spirit, appears in the light, is a child of light, even *is* light in the Lord, and, walking in the light, he walks by the Spirit. He enters more and more into the light, so that " his works may be made manifest that they have been wrought in God." He is a co-worker with God, thinking His thoughts, willing His will, doing His works; and, ever abiding in Him by faith, he rejoices in the hope of the glory of God. In God the good is an eternal self-revelation. In man, also, who is born of God, goodness retains the same character and is an impulse of self-manifestation. Hence it cannot remain hidden or covered by any night of darkness, for its nature is light. The activity of coming to the light is a continuous progress, developing the divine nature in an ever fuller degree, till the final consummation on the last day.

XI.

THE SPIRIT IN WORSHIP.

John iv. 1-26.

JESUS had claimed the Temple and had been denied; He had essayed to win Jerusalem, and had been rejected. Now, driven by unbelief to the outskirts of the land, and having there heard that the official classes had observed His success with a malignant eye, He "*left* Judæa." This was the beginning of the end, the first intimation of the rejection of the Jews and of the "unveiling of the Gentiles" (Luke ii. 32). By some necessity of the divine order He "must needs pass through Samaria," a country from which no proselyte could be received into Judaism, for its people were looked upon as swine. Jesus, in the heat of the day, came to the beautiful and historic spot where Abraham's eyes had been unveiled to see the land given to him, and where Jacob had dug a well. Vexed in spirit because of unbelief, He "sat *thus*," in an attitude of fatigue and dejection which might well appeal to a sympathetic eye. Having fallen among thieves, and being both wounded at heart and thirsty with inward toil, He had been left by Levites and priests. To Him, thus forlorn, would any Samaritan come and have compassion upon Him, binding His wounds and pouring oil upon them, and committing Him also to the care of others?

At that moment a woman of Samaria came to draw water, and, observing the Stranger's dignity of mien and wearied aspect, was naturally, as a woman, touched with sympathy. The rust of sin had not corroded her finer instincts, nor had it wholly dimmed her moral susceptibilities. Among the Jews the barrier of sex was so strong that the Rabbis held it better to burn the books of the Law than to teach them to a woman. This partition-wall was still higher in the case of a Samaritan. Yet in this hour of loneliness the barriers of race and of sex were swept away by the Spirit in Christ, and it was then first made known "that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (ver. 42). As the universality of spiritual power is revealed in the faith of the centurion, and the universality of grace in the case of the woman of Canaan, so the narrative of the woman of Samaria establishes the universality of true worship, while at the same time it shows how Jesus by the Spirit guided a semi-heathen to the great light. Jesus did not in His teaching directly combat other religions, yet He overthrew them all. The Judaism of His day held all the religious corruption of the world in solution; and when Jesus fulfilled the religious aspirations of Israel He at the same time assuaged the spiritual thirst of all nations. The spirit that had wrought in all the natural religions of the world could now return to God who gave it, and they, being earthly, would return to dust.

The words of Jesus to the woman, "Give Me to drink," were uttered in such a way as to arouse her wonder. Jesus appeared to her, and His request sounded like a favour conferred. Answering her curiosity, He said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." The singularity lay in His Person, and in the graciousness of His gift, namely the Spirit, which He distinguishes from Himself. It was a gift equal to the Giver, and her knowledge of both would be a knowledge by which He could give her "living water." The woman fastened upon the term "living water," wondering what it could mean. Jesus could not have meant the well by which they stood, for He had nothing wherewith to draw water; if He meant another well, could He be greater than Jacob, who gave that well, which yielded such a plentiful supply of "living water"? Perceiving her difficulty, Jesus indicated the nature of His gift: "Whosoever drinketh of it shall never thirst"; for "it shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life": a life *in* him, the gift of the Spirit, and the highest good. It is the fulness of life in all its relations and bearings; a life independent of all, springing up from itself unto itself as eternal life; man's own, yet not identical with the vessel that contains it.

Addressing Jesus at first as a Jew, the woman now calls Him "Lord," being conscious of some indefinable greatness in Him. She perceived that such a gift would enable her without toil to minister to the needs of others, her mind moving in a materialist groove, as the minds of many more highly privileged have done; yet she believed, and asked for the gift. Jesus will make good His word, yet a way must be prepared in a consciousness of moral need. The scene changes, and from the blue sky a thunderbolt falls. Looking at her with holy, penetrating eyes, and with His knowledge of the human heart, Jesus said, "Go, call thy husband." The woman felt that she was now on dangerous ground, and answered evasively yet with truthfulness, "I have no husband." Jesus, merely emphasising the word "husband," unrolled before her the blurred scroll of all her past life, revealing to her that she had by her brief answer stumbled upon a confession of guilt and of moral deterioration. Man's whole personality may be concentrated in one particular crisis, when the long-buried secrets of a lifetime rise as from their tombs. The Lord at once divined the nature of her sin, and, probing the sensitiveness of conscience, He laid bare her whole life.

Beginning to see who He was, she called Him a prophet; and, no longer evasively, but sincerely, having been led through repentance to a higher faith, she referred to Him the greatest question of an enlightened conscience, Where can I find God? Appealing to her faith, Jesus said, "Woman, believe Me," and then gave her the rubric of the new worship: "Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem," but "in spirit and truth" will the Father be worshipped. Worship will be a life relation of sonship, the self-revelation of God in man as in a temple. There will be no temple of God but man's heart, and no temple for man but the Spirit and Christ; no communion and no Church except by the Spirit. Yet until this worship was established there was a difference between the Jew and the Samaritan; for salvation was of the Jews, among whom there was a progressive faith.

The woman became aware of a mysterious presence, and she recalled the prophetic words regarding the Messiah. The shadow of a great truth fell athwart her soul. She felt the old world passing away, and saw a glimmer of the new, and her words now are really a prayer for more light. She knew not the road that she had already travelled, nor the greatness of the gift which had already been received, and which brought the longing for a higher gift. Presence may be felt before it is perceived, and she was on the brink of the question, Is this the Messiah? The woman knew that Messiah was coming, and that He would be an infallible guide. It were well for all men who seek infallibility to follow this semi-heathen Samaritan, and to set their hearts, that long for infallibility, upon Christ and upon Him alone. Jesus lifted for her the veil which He still kept between Him and the Jews, and openly told her, "I that speak to thee am He." Her errand forgotten, but, having tasted of the water of life, she hastened to the village, where she testified to the greatness of Christ by preaching Him to the men. The same living water took away from Jesus the sense of thirst by bringing joy of salvation. He was to say "I thirst" once again, when a greater thirst would be quenched by the same means.

"Quaerens me, sedisti lassus;
Redimisti, crucem passus,
Tantus labor non est vanus."

Jesus announced a radical change in worship when He said that the hour of the true worshippers was coming, and even had then come in Him. True, because they would be worshippers after the perfect form seen in Him; true, as contrasted not with the false, but with the lower forms which had hitherto prevailed, and which consisted in symbolic earthly ordinances of a merely materialistic kind. True worship is true communion between the worshipper and his God. In the Jewish Tabernacle and Temple there had been forms of communication, but no true communion, for the Jews did not see God, much less could they see Him as the Father.

The words "spirit and truth" imply the regenerate state. They are not man's natural spirit and reason, neither are they the Spirit and Christ personally considered, but the union of the divine and the human in regeneration. Spirit is begotten of the Spirit by the word of truth, which is Spirit and Life. The spirit is not to be severed in this case from the Spirit which is the power, nor any truth from the Truth. The sphere of true worship is in the union of what is human with that which is divine—the divine child-life, that sees the Father and communes with Him.

All disputes concerning worship must be decided by the answers given to the two fundamental questions: What is God? and, Wherewith can I come before Him? The prophets of Israel consistently taught that the teaching of God, to which that of man was subsidiary, ruled worship. Upholding the ethical nature of the old covenant, they denounced their people's trust in outward rites, however sacred, ornate, and diligently practised they might be: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" The relation of the people to God, or righteousness, was held to be a personal relation. The best analogue of it was found in man's family relations, as that of husband and wife, or that of parent and child,—relations which are personal and ethical. To honour a good man is more akin to worship than any other form of reverence, for to become united with any great personality, be it only by the hem of his garment, disposes the mind to receive beneficial influences through trust and love. Jesus Christ enabled men to see God as a Father, and they are found as children worshipping at His feet. In the same manner the Apostle Paul, in speaking to the devotional Athenians concerning worship in natural religion, bases his arguments upon the nature of God and upon man's close relationship to Him as His offspring.

John makes three declarations concerning God's nature, stating that He is Spirit, Light and Love. The three have a relation to the Trinity, what is described here as Spirit, Truth, and the Father. The statement that "God is Spirit" determines the nature of God; it therefore determines also the nature of worship. The declaration is so simple that a neophyte could understand it, and yet so great that though prophets and psalmists had come near it when declaring the spirituality of God, yet none could have uttered it except Jesus, who had an immediate knowledge of heavenly things. "God is Spirit" declares Him to be such absolutely, the foundation of all being, having sovereignty over all; for all that is material rests upon and is ruled by the spiritual. Being Spirit, He is also present with all, and in all: all are therefore present to Him; and the words, while expressing immateriality, answer the question, Why should we worship? as well as the question, How? The God who is Spirit is transcendent above all, and at the same time present with all. The truth that God is transcendent delivers worship from localisation, from all limitations of time and place—a principle which, if taken by itself and carried to extremes, would tend to a profitless mysticism, detaching worship from all that is seen. The other principle, that God is present with all, gives worship its universality, for wherever man exists, there also a temple of God may be found. Man's temple or place is the Spirit; God's temple is man born of the Spirit, where God reveals Himself. "We had gone out of doors, and are sent within. If you desire to pray in a temple, pray in yourselves; . . . but first be a temple of God."[1] "The Spirit is verily the place of believers, and believers are the place of the Spirit."[2] In the Spirit man returns to the root of his being, which confers upon him infinite love, and God's condescension hath made him great, for God reveals Himself by Himself in this temple.

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[1] Aug., *in loc.*

[2] Basil, xxvi. 62.

The other principle in the temple is Truth, which is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, or salvation. The phrase "God is Light" represents truth as it is in Jesus; for the message which He came to deliver was that "God is Light," One who essentially communicates Himself not only by His will, but as Being. He is a light which, in existing, exists for others, in perfection without reserve, for "in Him is no darkness at all." The subject of worship must be seen as present and living. A living emperor was a better idol than gods that were dead; and God must be a personal subsistence that has the power of affecting His worshippers. Before the coming of Christ men could not find out the Almighty unto perfection (Job xi. 7). He could not be personally found in nature, for personally He was not there to be found. To face the servants is not to meet the master. All the powers of nature testify to Him, pointing on to the "light unapproachable" as to a hidden shrine, saying, "We are not He: He made us." Man cannot be found in outward nature, far less God. We may survey all creation and fail to find Him: "High as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than Sheol; what canst thou know?" Within man there is something deeper than his own personality which teaches him knowledge, and the truth in Jesus appeals to this, "the light that is in thee." It is a personal God that guards man's personal identity and immortality. Yet God is not found within, though Kant was right in placing the knowledge of God in man's moral nature. Christ, indeed, in the Beatitudes, places it in the poverty of spirit, the moral needs of His spiritual nature. Yet "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." In Him only can men meet the Father; learning Christ, they know the Father by the truth as it is in Jesus. The truth is the substance of the immaterial temple and of its service. It is that with which the Spirit "fills the hands" of the worshippers, providing the offerings and sacrifices needed for the revealed presence. Receiving God by the vision, faith offers unto Him of His own. Every command is a promise, and every promise a command. By grace the service is spontaneous, its yoke easy and the burden light. The outgoing of the divine is by the Truth, its incoming is by the Spirit. The mediation by the truth and the spirit is twofold, but in perfect communion, forming the regenerate into a sanctuary after the image of their Lord.

Jesus says that God is to be worshipped thus as a Father, who seeks such worshippers as a father seeks his children. True worship is kinship, and God is Love, which is the essential ground of all true kinship. The truth in Christ and the testimony of the Spirit point to the "one God, the Father" (1 Cor. viii. 6). This intimates the spirituality and the unity of God, the origin and the end of His children, who are from and unto Him. He has been seeking men since Eden, in order that men might seek Him. So the Father who is Spirit *must* be worshipped by those who possess a similarity of nature upon which true knowledge of God depends. The worshipper is perfected as he grows in spirit and truth, which are equally developed by their mutual interaction,—truth in spirit, and spirit in truth, both together forming the highest cult, a true access unto the Father.

This inward, spiritual nature of true worship as a filial spirit towards God is only partially apprehended even yet, though it was fully illustrated in Jesus and His disciples. It has no comeliness for the natural man; it is either too subjective and unpractical, or too aggressive and extravagant. Jesus Christ was so judged by His contemporaries, although He was the greatest power in the history of the world. Having begun in the Spirit, men still think that they may be perfected in the flesh. Law and duty, forms and symbols, culture and art, are held to be essential to spiritual worship. They were essential to the old Temple, which, representing symbolically the body of Christ, had to be destroyed, so that the spiritual temple and its worship in life might appear. But the spiritual cannot be attained to from without, by natural means, for flesh cannot extricate itself from its own meshes, except by dying and becoming quickened by the Spirit. The record of Jesus contains no particle of evidence to show that anything is needed for worship in addition to His own Person and His gift, in which alone the human and the divine are in unity. Men receive from Him an understanding to know Him that is true (1 John v. 20). The Spirit sees its object from within, for He works from the centre out to the circumference. In matters of reason the imagination precedes the understanding, which follows after, gathering proofs by the way that what has been so apprehended is true. An intuition cannot be proved and communicated to another who has no affinity of mind with it. "To be in the Spirit" is to be free from sense limitations, and only the "pure in heart see God"; for spirit communicates with spirit by homogeneity of nature, having in the spirit and truth a window by which it sees "the things which are eternal." "The self-communication of the infinite Spirit to the soul of man is such that man is conscious of his relation to a conscious being, who is in eternal perfection all that man has in him to be."[1] The object of knowledge must be its principle, and He who is seen and he who apprehends are of the same nature; for "the relation of one person to another is not between them, but in them."[2]

> "Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with spirit can meet;
> Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

This is the *real presence* and the only one. No outward form, no mental induction, nothing but love can give love, which is the highest consciousness of God. It will consecrate all man's life, seizing times and places, circumstances and possessions as means of self-realisation. In worship we must start with revelation: "To call upon Him I must call Him unto myself; I should not be at all if Thou wert not in me; or rather, if I were not in Thee."[3]

There are many means which the Spirit uses in worship, yet every such vessel must be purified by blood and anointed with oil, to show forth the free filial nature of the true worshipper. The ritual is spiritual, as is the life that produces it. Prayer occupies the foremost place, and Jesus commands us, as He commanded the woman, to ask. When man is conscious of redemption, prayer leaps at the Cross into a song of thankfulness, "a sacrifice of praise," a sacrifice which, as the Rabbis taught, will never cease. "I will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, Peace"; for the Lord had formed His people for Himself, "that they might set forth My praise" (Isa. lvii. 19; xliii. 21). In his body man has a servant for his self-manifestation in the present order of things, where he has his treasure in an earthly vessel. The body becomes an organ of service in worship, and must be presented in a spiritual service as "a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God." With St. James pure ritual is charity and holiness; and to do good and to communicate are sacrifices acceptable to God. As in the case of the Samaritan, to announce to others the gift and the Giver, and to lead them to Jesus, is to worship.

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[1] Green, *Pro.*, p. 349. [2] Lotze. [3] Aug., *Conf.*

> "Heaven doth with us as we with torches do:
> Not light them for themselves."

Christianity came without rites or ceremonial ordinances, which are alien to its nature. It is a moral separation from the sinful world; the exercise of faith, hope, and love; a dependence on the Spirit of the Lord for all-sufficiency; a drawing together, in communion with one another, even in the face of a hostile world; submitting the one to the other in the Lord as teachers and taught. It evolved no priesthood, and never could, for the priesthood was the sign of spiritual bondage. Christians honoured one another after every natural order, as well as by the order of spiritual gifts, honouring the Lord in each other. The natural man's worship has prevailed greatly in times of spiritual decadence, in two opposite directions. On the one hand, formalism substituted heathen rites and Jewish spectacular and mimic ceremonies, which cannot exist where the Spirit operates. The most priestly book in the Bible witnesses "that the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the house" (2 Chron. vii. 2). On the other hand the carnal element may appear as the formality of informality, trying to acquire the Spirit without any form whatsoever. This also is a denial of the Spirit in worship, for He is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, whose whole life was a medium of service.

The Spirit, being most excellent, ever creates most excellent forms, whose beauty is of a spiritual order—the beauty of holiness. Its comeliness springs from the life which forms a raiment that is spiritual. What is naturally beautiful is not to be abjured because it is beautiful, for to the Spirit nothing human is alien, yet it must be spiritualised before it can be anything but a hindrance to worship. When objects that have a value for the natural man call attention to themselves instead of serving the Lord, and when the handmaid is lifted up against her mistress, sooner or later the Spirit says, "Cast out the handmaid" (Gal. iv. 30). Absolute beauty is absolute goodness, and in spirit and truth the beauty of the Lord is beheld, and assimilates the beholder with itself. It is serviceable even by existing, adorned and adorning. Art is perfect when through every portion of its form there shines forth its indwelling idea in use and beauty.

"All Christians are cathedrals;
Built by that only law that use be suggester of beauty;
Nothing concealed that is done, but all things done to adornment,
Meanest utilities seized as occasions to grace and embellish." [1]

In undertaking any work we should clearly understand what things are essential to it. The essentials of worship are spirit and truth. Christianity is a personal religion; its privileges and the solution of its difficulties lie in personality, in which so many truths that appear contradictory meet. It is the whole heart turned towards God. This excludes all subtle delusions of the imagination, all lip service, however ornate and æsthetic, all beggarly elements of the world. We must serve in newness of spirit; we must be men "who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

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[1] Clough.

The meeting of Christians for worship together is prompted by the instinct of our nature when illuminated by God's love. Society is that condition of human progress without which man is poor and weak. To gain one heart to beat in harmony with another is great progress. Society is to man's nature what utterance is to thought; it enables him to understand himself. Isolation is death; men grow by widening their sympathies, and are dwarfed when those sympathies are narrowed. The divine life in men needs communion with others as a condition of its own growth, and its greatest joys and blessings are such as can only be enjoyed in common. The Spirit at Pentecost was given to the brethren "that were all together in one place," whose communion with one another was the medium for revealing the divine presence among them. The presence of the Lord is promised to any two or three that meet in His name. The communion is essential to the presence. The most gifted and the least are equally blest, edifying and being edified in turn. St. Paul longed to see the Church at Rome, "that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine" (Rom. i. 12).

A Christian society, while in the flesh, exists in similar forms and under the same conditions as other human organisations. Some maintain that the individual exists for society, a view which may tend to sacrifice individual rights; others hold that society exists for the individual, and this again may tend to weaken the efficiency of the society as a whole. The ideal state must embody both views; and certainly the true Church, which is a kingdom of love, has both principles, perfecting every man while it is being perfected as a whole kingdom. When a true worshipper perceives his own highest good, he sees it to be related to that of others. As he grows, his relations expand, until finally he comes to see that his own perfection includes within it the consummation of all things, as he also perceives that the coming of the whole kingdom involves his individual salvation. The woman of Samaria felt the need of her larger self. Her joy, like all Christian joy, was communicative, gaining no adequate satisfaction unless shared with others, and reaching its desired end when her neighbours told her that they needed her testimony no longer. In the faith and the thanksgiving of the many the individual heart finds its own with exultation, "that the grace, being multiplied through the many, may cause the thanksgiving to abound unto the glory of God" (2 Cor. iv. 15).

Christianity is the highway of the world as the ultimate religion, and the solvent power of all other faiths. There is no continuous progress outside of it; there is infinite progress within it. It inherits all the past, and holds the future in its hand. Looking before and after, it is guided by the Spirit, who blesses His Church under all forms and modes of worship. Though the Church is often weighed down by corruptions and carnal arrogance, yet "God is Spirit," and they that worship Him *must* worship in spirit and truth. The highest truth is a spiritual being that attains a form adequate to the full expression of its spirit. On the way it may enter into immediate unity with what is visible; and when the union has become perfect, and the Spirit has moulded the form into a perfect conformity with itself in glory, then no temple is seen any more, "for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple thereof."

XII.

THE OLD AND THE NEW DISPENSATIONS.

JOHN vii. 37-39.

ON the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the most joyful day in that feast of joy, Jesus, contrary to His custom, stood up amidst the merriment and the superficial gladness, and cried with a loud voice, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." There was no fountain of water on the Temple hill. "The waters of Shiloah that go softly" flowed from the foot of the hill, and during the feast water was carried from this stream and poured in libations on the altar, when Isaiah xii. 3 was chanted and prayers were offered for rain. The idea of a fountain in the Temple itself pertains to the prophecies of the coming Spirit. The longing of the human heart for joy proved the existence of a deep thirst for a greater fulness of life. The fathers of Israel had pursued, but had not overtaken, joy; yet it had been promised them that they should "overtake gladness and joy." When Jesus saw the people drawing from broken cisterns He in pity cried above the din of the Temple courts, that He alone could assuage their thirst, for He was the true Temple. Then he added, "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters." To faith this further promise is given, which would enable the recipients to communicate life to others, for the life would be *in* them, "a life in themselves," a source of living waters.

The exact words which are given by our Lord as a quotation are nowhere found in our Scriptures. Yet whenever the spiritual Temple is referred to, living waters are said to spring from its inmost parts. Great rivers make great countries, and Ezekiel saw a river that issued from under the Temple threshold, creating a new world, and turning the arid desert into fruitfulness and joy: "the fruit of the trees was meat and the leaf thereof for healing."

John adds: "This He spake of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive," for "the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Some MSS. read, "Holy Spirit was not yet," which is only explanatory, as "Spirit" without the article signifies the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ dwelling in men. He is the great promise given through the Incarnation and the Passion, and of Him thus considered it is proper to say "that He was not yet." The Spirit had ever been with men; good tidings had been preached as a gospel (Heb. iv. 2), and sacraments had been given as great redemptive acts in the Red Sea and the wilderness (1 Cor. x. 1-4). The Spirit, as Holy Spirit, was given by Jesus Christ. He was sent at Pentecost from the Lord, to be the distinctive characteristic of the New Dispensation, the power to create and continue it.

The expression "streams of waters" has been taken to refer to the extraordinary miraculous gifts conferred upon the Apostolic Church. But this is to substitute the sign for the substance. The Spirit was ever immanent in nature and in man, and His arm is not shortened when operating as the Spirit of Jesus Christ, for through the miraculous gifts the attention of the world was roused to give a hearing to the Gospel. Yet these gifts in themselves were more nearly allied than any others to the prophetic ecstasies. They appeared in the New Dispensation as relics of the old, exhibiting feeling rather than mind, and betokening men possessed rather than possessing. Thus they formed a link uniting the two dispensations. They served the Church by towing it, so to speak, through the narrow seas in which its voyage began, and setting it fairly on the open sea of humanity. Their service was temporary, and they ceased when once they became a hindrance rather than an advantage, being at best but accessory, and not of the essence of salvation. The extraordinary gifts at Pentecost were unique and prophetic in their nature, signs of what the Church born that day would be. The word "tongues" in the narrative points out the nature of the Spirit of Pentecost. He is pre-eminently a teaching Spirit. Language and religion are most intimately allied in human life. The Spirit lays hold upon this great faculty of speech, not to merge all tongues into one, but in order that in all a higher tongue may be heard speaking the mighty works of God. The "tongues" were prophetic signs of the nature and the universality of the new Church.

Bishop Bull says "that the Law laboured under a double defect of aiding grace, having not the gift of the Holy Spirit, nor the promised eternal life."[1] Eternal life is sonship by faith, and the Law is not of faith, neither did it, nor could it, stimulate any virtue by a promise of eternal life. Faith and eternal life are the source and the crown of sonship. To it graces are communicated; in it the Spirit is life in life, light in light, springing from within in one act by an interpenetration, He in man and man in Him. Man is to be saved by man. Those gifted with the Spirit are the Lord's gifts to the world. He endows them and sends them as living streams, seeing the spiritual, sympathising with it, and following it with undaunted courage. "Every good man is a mediator between his neighbours and God," says Philo, and the Church is a representation of the mediatorship of Jesus Christ, who has not left His disciples "orphans," anonymous, nondescript, but has so provided that His name shall be written upon them by the Spirit, who is the soul, the animating principle of the Church, His body. This *spirituality* is the great difference between the new and the old, which at once lifted the Church into a higher plane of thought and feeling. By sonship the old bond of blood-relationship was broken, and another life-relation was substituted for it, dividing humanity according to its inner nature, and so introducing a duality into the race, which could not be fully revealed until the Spirit came, and earthly forms gave way to the heavenly. The new life is not dependent on full consciousness of it, yet it strives to be perfect, as the Father is perfect, bybecoming conformed to Christ. Justification gives an entrance into those filial rights of the Son which are realised in Regeneration, whereby an assurance of these blessings is gained. Israel was turned towards God; the Christian is regenerated and sent by Christ, so as to be glorified in the coming age. The Spirit was *with* the old; Holy Spirit is *in* the new.

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[1] *Harmonia*, x.

The Sonship of Christ has three stages of revelation. Before the incarnation He was the immanent Son; in the days of His flesh He was the Son as the servant; in heaven He is the Son of God in power. Under the Old Dispensation there existed an immanent sonship of believers, which was such that a son "differed nothing from a bond-servant, though he was lord of all" (Gal. iv. 1). Under the New, men are free by the Spirit, and yet are servants.

This state corresponds to the days of our Lord on earth, and unites the heavenly and the earthly in one mission of service. As to the coming state, "it is not yet made manifest what we shall be." Under the New Dispensation men are both means and ends, being themselves perfected by their mission of service. If they confine within channels too narrow the stream of their service, they miss their own ideal; but if they allow it to flow in a broad flood, the greatest become the bondservants of all by an outflow of love and gratitude without any factitious means (Matt. xx. 27). Had regeneration been given under the Old Dispensation as under the New, its spirituality would have revolutionised men's thoughts, and the law, *ipso facto*, would have ceased.

There are passages which treat of the vast difference between the two dispensations, such as John iii. 11, 14, viii. 56, Matthew xi. 11, 13, 17, and Hebrews xi. 40. In the last-named passage the words "apart from us they should not be made perfect" express the truth that their full redemption depended not only on the coming of Christ, but also upon the whole dispensation of His Spirit, and therefore upon the ministry of believers who run the race, of which they who have gone before are deeply interested spectators, their own expectations being affected by the issues of the contest. The saints of the Old Dispensation could have no adequate conception of the present dispensation; but at the same time they were able to look beyond it, seeing what we cannot yet clearly see. It is most difficult for Christian men to realise the state of the Old Testament saints. The present dispensation is strange and mysterious, as having the heavenly in an earthly form. For the kingdom is a *coming* kingdom, time being a condition of salvation. The regenerate state is intermediate between the psychical and the heavenly, a walking by faith and not by sight, having its beauty in the spiritual world, but not yet glorified.

Christianity is therefore no mere development of Judaism but its fulfilment. It retains the cardinal principle of Judaism with a radical difference in type. Judaism veiled a mystery which it could not reveal, not even as an esoteric reserve. Sin had not been atoned for, condemnation was not out of sight; for the Law watched men, ready to visit their transgressions with condign punishment, and the fear of death was as a veil and a shadow upon the soul. Sin even has a far deeper import under the New Dispensation than it had under the Old, for its inner nature is now laid bare by the spiritual touch of Christ's teaching. It is the defiling of a temple, a crucifying afresh of the Son of God, a "doing despite unto the spirit of grace." This could not be brought home to the saints of old. Forgiveness, again, under the Old Testament is said to be "the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God"; accordingly there existed a sense of incompleteness in the moral consciousness, until Jesus Christ secured eternal redemption for men.

Moses knew that the system he founded was not the best possible, but the best for Israel as a nation. It governed the Jew from the cradle to the grave, and embraced the whole compass of his common life. To establish ordinances and, at the same time, to teach Israel that they were temporary would have destroyed their disciplinary power. The people were commanded to obey, and no reason was assigned except that they were commanded by the Holy One. It was a state of pupilage, so that Christians are nearer to the patriarchal than the Mosaic dispensation—just as an adult is in the matter of freedom nearer to a little child than to a growing youth who is placed under discipline preparatory to the freedom of manhood. A parent loves all his children equally, yet this love may take the form of tenderness towards a babe, but of severe discipline towards a growing youth. The discipline hides the true nature of the love, and parents or teachers claim obedience without assigning a reason for the command given and without laying stress upon the freedom of the child as the greatest determining factor in the obedience demanded. Tutors and guardians must insist upon implicit obedience, without regard to the inclination of the child entrusted to their charge, as a preparatory training for a career of service in the future. The child's attention must be concentrated upon obedience as his sole present duty, and his future will supply the reason. Under the most severe training the original relation abides, even where there is no difference of condition between the heir and a bondservant. He is trained, disciplined and chastised because he is destined to fill a high position, which calls in the present for implicit trust, and not because he has been permanently subjected to serfdom. The veil which was on the face of Moses when he spake to the people, and which he laid aside when he entered into the presence of the Lord, was symbolical. The veil was there in order that the people might not be able to detect the passing away of the glory from the face of Moses, and so it preserved the authority of the system from being weakened. Free communion in love was not applicable to the case, and the ordinances had to be impressed upon the heart of the people as an awful necessity of law, by which alone God's favour was possible, and which, if they transgressed, would bring certain destruction upon them. All their spiritual relations depended upon the covenant while it lasted. The Spirit in the law enabled believers to serve the Lord willingly even when the glorious mystery of their sonship was hidden by the veil. All their religious graces, joys and delights were conditioned by the legal relation in which they stood, so that progress in the knowledge of God was not possible except through faithfulness to the covenant of Sinai.

Meanwhile the Abrahamic covenant of grace was like an inheritance "held in Chancery," waiting the time appointed by the Father and the coming of the promised seed. The promise of the Father was the Holy Spirit, whom men were to receive by faith, and who was not bestowed upon them until the coming of faith in Christ. In Him the veil which hid the Father's love was removed, the curse of the Law and its condemnation passed away in remission of sins, the slave received the sonship of adoption and entered the kingdom of God rejoicing in the hope of His glory. A free access has been provided to the true heavenly sanctuary, where no cherubim with fiery swords guard the entrance. Sinners can pass in to the eternal throne of divine majesty, whose hidden foundations are righteousness and judgment and whose aspect towards man is goodness and mercy. God's people come now to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, to angels, to the congregation of the firstborn, to God the Judge of all, and to the blood that speaketh peace. Law implies necessity; the Spirit is freedom. Where the Spirit is, the free and the necessary are united in a love which illumines all worship and duty with the newness of the Spirit, and which, as a rainbow of peace, sheds glory even upon the sorrows of life, creating a new heaven and a new earth.

Israel was called as a nation apart from all others, but not sent. It was a system applicable to the limited area of a single nation, which was complete in itself, and whose religion was committed to it as a trust—a religion separate from others by virtue of a divine ethical sense, though similar to other religions in form. It could not be universal, though universality lay latent in it; for universality comes with the spiritual and the personal. Many expressions are used in the Old Testament Scriptures which have been objected to as contrary to the spirit of the New. But they are due to the lower spiritual plane of the Old Dispensation and to the national calling of Israel, with its inevitable ethical limitations. Other nations, and the ungodly within Israel itself, stood in the same relation to the Old Testament saints as that of the spiritual powers of evil to the Christian heart. The principle is the same; the form is different, because Christians are called out of the world in order to be sent into the world, loving Christ and loving the sinful world in His love. This mission is the outcome of a higher order, in which man, by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, is prophet, priest and king. Partaking of the mediatorial offices of the Son, he is a living fount, and is refreshed himself by refreshing others, teaching as a prophet, praying and suffering as a priest, convincing and guiding as a king, a reflexion of his Lord above. As one in office, it behoves him to receive his power from a higher source, and to be in an immediate personal relation to the sphere of his mission as well as to the Lord, uniting both in himself. He looks to Him who sent him, saying to others, "Be as I am, for I am as ye are."

In John iii. 32-36 we have the difference expressed between the New Dispensation and the Old, for in these verses Christ as a prophet is said to be from above, and is contrasted with John, the greatest of prophets. All that believe are like unto Christ, beholding heavenly verities; for "he that is of the earth is of the earth, and of the earth he speaketh." Christ incarnate has introduced a new order of prophets and teachers: "whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God, for He giveth not the Spirit by measure." The Father hath loved Christ, so that He is the absolute possessor of all, for "all things" are given into His hands. Whether the giver indicated in the verse be the Father or Christ, the same result follows. It is not by measure that the Spirit is given to him who believes, and who hath "set his seal to this, that God is true." John, the greatest of the prophets, could not rise to spiritual forms of truth, for the Spirit was given him by measure. The Spirit is now given without measure, and therefore the message and the messenger are one. A Christian gives what he is, without any strain or lack of harmony between the medium and the message. A difference exists also in the learner, for the Old Testament itself is read by Christians universally in a vastly different manner from that in which it was read by the Jews. The veil having been taken away, the light of the New Testament falls upon the Old, and Jesus Christ is seen in all with such a preponderating power that it is difficult for many Christian men to think that the saints of old saw it all in a different light. We read the new into the old. We can scarcely realise the state of childhood in which the saints were, with its severe separation and its incompatibility with the free fellowship of sons. "Draw not nigh hither" was the voice that came to Moses from the bush, and the saying contains the essence of his system.

The modes of inspiration under the New Testament and the Old differ in the same manner. The operations of the Spirit under the Old prove that the effects were mentally, and even physically, abnormal. The Holy Spirit in the Gospel comes to remind men of Christ. The epistles are in the every-day form of letter-writing, intensely human, the more human the more divine, so divinely human as to be natural. The writers were "friends," not bondservants who came from the presence weighed down by the message, and crying, "The burden of the Word of the Lord!" The revelation given in the Old Testament was fragmentary, "in divers portions and in divers manners,"—in divers portions, because no truth could be adequately conveyed in its entirety. Truth was as if wrecked, part after part drifting to land, and thrown up from the deep, each fragment, though isolated, being yet evidently a part of a larger whole. In Christ all the parts are perfect, and all truths are one in the unity of its truth. The Old Testament saints, however, lived in an age when men were ever expecting messages to come from above.

The ministration of angels was more real to the thoughts of the saints of old than it is to us under the Christian dispensation. Christ is looked upon by Christians as the absolute King, into whose hands all providential events have been entrusted to promote the purposes of grace. The coming of the King has, by its glory, caused the light of the servants to become invisible. The stars are in the heavens in the midday glare, but hidden by the light; and the system of the heavens continues in unbroken order. Christ is the Head of creation and Head of the angels. By the spirit of His might He upholds the totality of things, to the end that all creation and its order may minister to the good of those who love Him. Angels were nearer to the mind of Old Testament saints because Christ had not yet appeared. His light was seen only as reflected in the hosts of the Lord, who served in the providential government of the world. Of old the visits and appearances of angels were expected as those of messengers of the King and mediators of His dealings with men. They ministered then, and they minister still, to the heirs of salvation. But the spirituality of the New Dispensation has brought the sanctuary of the Godhead to view, so that faith can see the Lord Himself, whom the servants ever serve.

Each prophet and each age presented the truth as it appeared from his and its own standpoint; but all looked towards the same heavens. They made continual discoveries in the domain of truth. The lights at some periods were more glorious, at other times they faded away; yet never were the people left without some degree of comfort. They saw prognostications in the heavens which they studied, and bowed their ears to the ground to hear the firm tread of God's hosts. Their blessings were great, yet it was night, and the light shone in darkness. Nansen's description of the polar night may be taken as an analogue of the old in form, effect and purport:

"Nothing more beautiful can exist than the arctic night. It is dreamland painted in the imagination with the most delicate tints, and is colour etherealised. One shade melts into the other, so that you cannot tell where one ends and the other begins, and yet they are all there: all faint, dreamy, colour music; a far-away, long-drawn-out melody of muted strings. Is not all life's beauty high and delicate and pure like this night? The sky is like an enormous cupola, blue at the zenith; and on the ice-fields there are cold, violet-blue shadows. Up in the blue cupola shine the stars, speaking peace. Presently streamers in tongues of flame are over the very zenith; and again it shoots a bright ray from the horizon, until the whole melts away into moonlight, and it is as though one heard the sigh of a departing spirit. Here and there are left a few streamers, vague as a foreboding, and all the time the stillness is impressive as the symphony of infinitude. I have never been able to grasp the fact that this earth will some day be spent, desolate and empty. To what end, then, all this beauty? Now I begin to divine it! This is the coming earth; here are beauty and death. To what purpose? Read the answer if you can in the starry blue firmament." The spiritual night of the old world has turned into day, and the earth will nevermore be left desolate.

The priesthood of believers is maintained by prayer and manifold services for the salvation of the world. The streams of blessing flow on, now weaker, now stronger; but they never become dry, for, as the goblet of the gods, in the Scandinavian legend, could not run dry because it was connected with the ocean, so the men who are united with the indwelling Spirit can never be exhausted. It is a universal priesthood partaking of personality and character. Prejudices and national barriers gave way before the ministry of love, and the disciples followed the guidance of the Spirit, who led one to speak to an Ethiopian and others to go to Samaria. Another He sent to the Gentiles; and though the Jews found it hard to reconcile this with their cherished beliefs, yet, when they heard that the Spirit had fallen upon the Gentiles, "they held their peace, and glorified God." The risen life of the Church must be free, just as in the case of Lazarus, of whom, having come forth bound in his grave-clothes, the Lord said, "Loose him, and let him go." The Spirit ruled in all, for "The God that answers by fire, let Him be God." The nobility of man was apprehended as the greatest fact on earth, when the missionary, the teacher and the philanthropist appeared. The priestly hearts of the disciples bore the burden of the sin of men. They supplied a need that they felt in themselves, transfiguring the home, the state and the world; and their remedial influences flowed along the conduits of all natural relations. Journeys were undertaken by missionaries who had been chosen by the Spirit. He sent them, He sustained them in persecutions, He guided them, and appointed their field of labour. They adapted themselves to all circumstances, for they were constrained by love, and they rejoiced when counted worthy to suffer on behalf of Christ. The waters have continued to move, with many alternations of ebb and flow, down to our own day, and it will be so "until He comes."

The kingly character of the disciples appeared in the manifestation of the Spirit and in power. They acted for the King of kings, who drew all unto Himself, and were mightier than the world when it persecuted them. The narrative of the sin of Ananias (Acts v. 1-11) is given in order to show the power of judgment that was granted to the disciples. When they were opposed by the Jewish rulers, the place wherein they were gathered was shaken, bringing them an assurance that the Jewish state would be removed. When they were first imprisoned in a Roman prison, an earthquake opened the doors, liberated the prisoners, and led to the conversion of the jailer, the incident conveying a prophetic intimation to the apostles of the relation of the Gospel to the Empire. In the discourses in the upper room (John xiv. to xvii.) Jesus enlarges upon the nature of the ministry of the

Spirit, who, dwelling in His disciples and in all future believers, should form Christ within them as Prophet, Priest and King. The Holy Spirit has come to abide, and will not leave His people until His work is accomplished. In the coming of the Spirit, the Heavenly Dove, there are three sendings, as was the case with Noah's dove. Noah sent the dove the first time to see if the waters were abated; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and returned; and he put forth his hand, and brought her into the ark. He sent her again, and she came in to him at eventide, and, lo! in her mouth an olive leaf. He sent her forth for the third time, "and she returned not again unto him any more." The Spirit was sent under the Old Testament, but He found no rest in man, and returned to Him who sent Him. The Spirit was sent again to Christ incarnate, and He returned from earth in the Ascension, and lo! He bore heavenwards an olive leaf, which proved that the waters of judgment had abated. On Pentecost He was sent the third time, and has returned no more, but dwells among men in a world where He blesses all who receive Him with all spiritual blessings, and abides as the great source of all life until the coming of the Son of man.

XIII.

THE GLORIFICATION OF CHRIST.

JOHN vii. 39, xiii. 32, xvii. 1-6.

JUDAS, who had been an obstacle to free communion between Jesus and His disciples, went out into the darkness, leaving the light behind him in the upper room to shine forth and flood the place with its glory. Jesus, in these discourses and in the great prayer which follows and summarises them, opens out His heart to the disciples as He had never done before. The one great theme in them all is the Holy Spirit, whether He be mentioned by name or not. The words of Christ rise up like waves from a great deep, appearing at first to repeat the same thought, yet, to a more careful observation, revealing the same theme in ever new and wider aspects. Tears and joy are akin in man. As in music the deepest sorrow and the highest joy may be expressed by similar movements, so in these words of Jesus grief and comfort are intertwined. He, without quitting the form of a servant, passed into a full consciousness of His future glory, His experience in the process being a kind of inward transfiguration in the valley of the shadow of death, where His words, coming from an immeasurable spiritual exaltation, sound as "words purified seven times" (Ps. xii. 6).

John says that "the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 39). He calls our Lord "Jesus" in order to emphasise His humanity, which, being flesh, needed to be assimilated and pervaded by the Spirit, so as to become an adequate organ for a full manifestation of Himself in a divine form. The glorification of Jesus began with the Crucifixion, and was perfected by the Resurrection and the session on God's right hand of power. This change could be wrought only through death —a sacrificial death, for "it behoved the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory."

Jesus, when Judas had departed, burst out into a song of triumph: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; and God shall glorify Him in Himself, and straightway shall He glorify Him." The first two clauses describe the glorification on its earthly side, where His life and death are His own glorification and that of God—of the Godhead in Him. Jesus is ever after seen in glory, even on the Cross, for on it He conquers. The two subsequent clauses refer to the heavenly side of the glorification, being the one which God causes "in Himself" and which was immediately to follow. Jesus stepped from the Cross into a unity of His whole Person as Son of man with God as Spirit, and by this unity He again glorifies God as the Father in the form of divine majesty. He calls the Father here "God," which name shows the universal bearing of the glorification. The special relation of Father is given in John xii. 28: "Father, glorify Thyself."

When the flesh became responsive to the Spirit, as its fit partner, in union with whom it wholly depends for its life, it could assume a divine mode of existence, being one with and in God. In discussing Ps. cxxxix. we found that the Spirit of God operated in man in a divine manner by means of the three attributes of omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. Our Lord, while in the flesh, could not be inwardly and universally present with and in His people in the manner in which the divine presence is described in the psalm, because He was under the limitations of the flesh; when, however, He is glorified in God, by His Spirit, the Son of man may be, and is, in His people, as one who knows them, is present with them, and works in them. Where the Spirit is, there Jesus Christ is, and acts in divine knowledge, presence and might.

In the prayer (chap. xvii. 1-6) Jesus addresses God not as "My Father," which would point to His own unique relationship to God, but as "Father," who in Him has a relation to all believers; so that in making requests for Himself He did so also on behalf of those given unto Him. Inasmuch as the predetermined hour had come, He prayed to be glorified as the Son, in order that He might further glorify the Father *in* the disciples. This request rested upon the ineffable personal relation in which He eternally stood to His people in the purpose of the Father, who had ever constituted Him the sovereign head over all flesh, its Lord and Judge. There is an eternal union of the Church with Christ which implies the union realised in time. The Father had given Him an "all" that was one, to whom severally Christ was to give perfect union with God in eternal life. This life contains a knowledge of God as "the only true God," and this knowledge is by the revelation of the Son, Jesus Christ. Here only does Jesus call Himself "Jesus Christ," a name which was treasured by the disciples and used henceforth by them. Then, referring to Himself as the Person so constituted, He says that the work given Him as a mission on earth was now accomplished, thus rendering it necessary that the work should be carried on in another form of revelation. This new form depended upon a change that was to be wrought in the Son of man. The mission of Christ would be carried on by the Spirit, whose mission is the result of God glorifying Jesus "in Himself," a divine glory under divine conditions. This is a manifestation of the eternal and hidden glory, which the Son had with the Father "before the world was," yet in relation to the world, for it needs must be that the glory which belongs to the Son as the heir of all should belong to Him also as the cause of all. In order to declare the Father's name more fully to those who had received the manifestation already given, Jesus asks that He may be glorified with the fulness of the glory which He had before the world was.

By this glorification the work of the Prophet, who was also a Priest upon earth, became kingly in its might by the Spirit. These offices of prophet and priest are the two olive trees of Zechariah which supplied the bowl with oil that flowed into the seven lamps—the seven spirits of God, conquering "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit." The Spirit is the sovereignty of Jesus over all nations and individuals; a sovereignty over physical, mental, moral and spiritual powers, equally supreme over all. It is a stream of spiritual influence, like a river of Paradise, flowing out and encompassing all lands.

In the discourses which follow, this divine sovereignty is explained to the sorrowful disciples in its manifold blessings. The name Jesus is one to which every knee should bow, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 11). He who can save must be the King of men, and Jesus now sits among His disciples as a true king: "I chose out their way, and sat as chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners" (Job xxix. 25). From Him in glory all the messengers of power would go forth; to Him all would return; His will all would be doing. So He commands them not to be troubled in their heart—the seat of moral consciousness—because His Spirit would reveal Him to them as true God. This subject is explained in chapter xiv. They on earth would become so united to Christ in heaven that their fruit, by the perseverance of love, would bear witness to His union with God and to their union with Him, as explained in chapter xv. The Spirit of the glorified Jesus would also be in them a divine might to conquer the world, as is shown in chapter xvi. Each stage would bring to perfection the sonship of the disciples: through the first they would become His prophets, through the second His priests, and through the third His kingdom, yet working after the pattern of His mission on earth, "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus" (2 Cor. iv. 7-10).

XIV.

THE INDWELLING SPIRIT.

(John xiv. 16-24.)

(*a*) THE CONDITIONS OF THE GIFT (vers. 1-13).

THE spiritual conditions demanded for the dwelling of the Spirit in man are here represented to be gifts to faith according to the law expressed in Augustine's prayer, "Ask what thou wilt, but give what thou askest." Jesus challenges the faith of the disciples as their God: "Ye believe [or believe ye] in God, believe also in Me." He as the sole object of faith claims divine majesty, commanding them to identify their faith in Him with their faith in God. For faith in Him as a teacher only could not give them an inward assurance either of the deity of Christ or of their own union with Him. But the faith that would calm their troubled hearts, and fully satisfy their yearning for union with God, and give them abiding joy and peace, is that which by the Spirit sees the historical Jesus Christ as God. So long as men fail to identify completely the idea of God with the personality of Christ, their faith is imperfect; for they fail to find "the Father in the Son"; and for them, therefore, "the Son is not in the Father." The indwelling Spirit gives to the regenerate that vision of Jesus which led the disciples to call Him "Lord"; for every capacity in man that witnesses for

God, at the same time and in the same manner bears witness also to Jesus Christ.

Jesus then adds, as a natural conclusion, that His separation from them would be but another mode of the presence of the Father with them: "In My Father's house are many mansions." "Mansions" were resting-places on the way; the Father's house is God's self-revelation in His fellowship with men. The word "mansions" occurs only here and in verse 23, where, doubtless, it refers to the indwelling of the Spirit, whereby the Father and the Son dwell with men, forming of them a house of God,—"whose house ye are." Here also it refers to the same union; and our Lord comforts His disciples, not by saying that there is a rest which they could enter when their pilgrimage came to an end, but by indicating that there are many modes of the divine presence with men, and all are "in His Father's house." The difficulty of the disciples was the hidden spiritual nature of the New Dispensation, in which there is neither an earthly temple nor the visible bodily presence of Christ. So He informs them that the presence makes itself felt in various ways, and that men's service would vary accordingly. Sufficient for the disciples now was the assurance that the mode of the presence might change without becoming less effective. Had it been otherwise He would have told them; because His whole teaching was based on the presupposition that He and the Father would ever be with them. He, the Christ, in whom the Father and the Spirit dwelt was to them all in all. The words may therefore have a further application; for when Jesus turns with His disciples into any mansion as to a resting-place, "He makes as though He would go further" (Luke xxiv. 28), yet He goes in to abide with them, and reveals Himself. All His words in the upper room refer, in the first instance, to the disciples in their present sorrow; even the petition in John xvii. 24, "I will that where I am they also may be with Me," refers to the dispensation of the Spirit, of which it is an exact description, for it places the disciples in a relation to Himself such as He when on earth held to the Father.

"I go to prepare a place for you" implies that that was the purpose of His going. "Place" is not a locality, but a state of being. It is not the same as "mansion," the preparing of it being rather the adaptation to each other of the heavenly things and of men. It is the "cleansing" of Hebrews ix. 19-22, which, by the sprinkling of blood, cleansed the heavenly things, and adapted them for men, and consecrated men to the heavenly service by the same blood. If the going away of Jesus was to prepare such a state for them, it must also imply His coming again to them—a continuous coming, expressed in the words "and will receive you unto Myself." "Unto Myself" means, unto the state in which He was, to share His mission because they had the necessary qualification for it, and so to stand where He stood, "so that where I am ye may be also." Where the Master is, there also shall the servant be. He would possess them by the Holy Spirit, and by the Spirit take them unto Himself. The apparent suggestion of tritheism in the evangelical, as in other schools of religious thought, hides from view the truth that the coming of the Spirit is the coming of Christ. The Father was in the Son essentially, so that the Son was more than His representative; neither is the Spirit merely a representative of Christ. The coming of the Spirit fulfils Christ's own promise: "I am with you alway." The Father is also present in the Spirit, for the Spirit is the personal witness to the union of Christ with the Father as well as to His union with men. The going away of Christ in the flesh was His coming again in the Spirit; and His people would enter into a union with Him in the place prepared: and "the place of believers is the Spirit."

When Jesus departed by death, His own Person was for Him the entrance to the Father. By this entrance He made a way, a highway: "Whither I go ye know the way." "They knew, and knew not that they knew."[1] They knew it not as a way, for had they so known His Person in His death they would have perceived the purpose of His death. Thomas expressed the common opinion that men must know the *whither* in order to know the way. Jesus answered that a true way unites the point from which it starts with that which it reaches as its goal. A true mediation includes the points of departure and arrival. He Himself was the Way which is Truth and Life. It is Truth because it is a revelation of the heavenly verities in our nature: it is Life by His death, the Son of man ascending where He was before. The Truth and the Life in union are the Way, descending and ascending, God's way to man, man's way to God, the union of God and man in which He shall be with the wayfarers (Isa. xxxv. 8). Christ is the only way to a knowledge of God as the Father: "No one cometh to the Father but through Me." The Truth and the Life, the Word and the Spirit, are all divine. They are one with God, and in union with men.

Had the disciples a vital knowledge of Jesus they would have had an equally vital knowledge of the Father, "and from henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him." The historical Jesus revealed "from henceforth" the vision of the Father, which revelation the Spirit gives. Philip afforded Jesus an opportunity of bringing His own divinity home to them in a still more direct manner. Neither their knowledge of the Father nor their faith in Christ was yet a vision of God in Christ; so Philip said, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus answered that the theophany they asked for was constantly with them in Him, and that there were two witnesses to the reciprocal, essential unity of the Father and the Son, namely "the words" and "the works." Being is known by its expression in word and deed, and these are the witnesses to which Jesus refers His disciples. He gives the foremost place to His words, but they could not have carried conviction without the deeds that accompanied them. The Father, abiding in Jesus, wrought the works, thus sealing the words as His own. To "abide," in John, implies effort and battling against obstacles. Jesus tells the disciples that by His works the Father was striving to draw men unto the Son, so that, if they could not see the divine unity in the revelation by the words, they might be led to see it in the light of the works, which, being visible, made universal appeal to men. Jesus thus again claims their faith in Him as God, on the ground that He was the perfect way to God and the perfect revelation of God to them.

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[1] Aug., *in loc.*

The faith which the indwelling Spirit of the glorified Christ would give the disciples has in it the power to do similar works to those which Jesus did, and to do greater works—greater in spiritual power, because such works would be the works of Christ in the Father, who is mightier than Christ in the flesh. These works are the divine works of Christ in and by men, because the Holy Spirit is not to be separated in act from those to whom He is given. The way to receive these works from Christ is by prayer "in His name," a phrase used now for the first time. "In the name" of Christ means in the union and the dependence of faith in Him. The phrase appears in connection with prayer and its answer, when Christ shall have ascended to the Father. It had been used before of the miraculous power that accompanied the name of Jesus when preached. "In the name" is "in the Person" of Jesus, for when the word "Person" had not come into use, "name" expressed the same thought. It is also the Person revealed, and apprehended in the truth, and is not a hidden charm. Moreover, the "name" is this revealed Person in authority, which is an essential part of the meaning of the word. This "name" is divine and human, and of this union the Holy Spirit is the exponent, enabling believers to pray according to the mind of Christ. Jesus therefore can say, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do," for the prayer is in harmony with His will.

The prayer must be accompanied by the obedience of the love that keeps His commandments; for, as Jesus obeyed by speaking and doing what the Father spake and did, so the self-denial of the disciples would be proved by their readiness to obey Him as the absolute authority over their whole life. In the words "keeping My commandments" there lies an intimation of difficulties to be surmounted, and of great things to be attempted and achieved for Christ, whereby man strives to be one with his Lord. "Keeping" is not retaining in the memory, but a constant exercise of the conscience and the will in the bond of love.

In John xvii. 6-12 Jesus presents the disciples to the Father as worthy to receive the Spirit, on the ground that they are such as He commands them to be. He had manifested the name "Father" to those who had been given Him out of the world, and they had kept the Father's word, so that they knew, by vital experience, that such words had been given Him of the Father. They had been so given Him in order that He might give them in turn to His disciples, who, on receiving them, would know that He had come forth from the Father on an authoritative mission of saving love. He could thus intercede only for the disciples; for, in the first place, He says in verse 10 "They are Thine"; in the second place He says, "And all things that are Mine are Thine,"—they are redeemed and trained by receiving His word, so as to belong to the Father in a still more intimate relation; in the third place, "and Thine are Mine," because, by virtue of their new relation to the Father, they became Christ's own servants and the meet instruments of His mission, and He would be glorified in them by the Spirit. Then Jesus appeals to the "Holy Father," who as "holy" could take them now unto Himself as sons, that He would claim these as His own by the Spirit, and sanctify them to His own ends. He gives three circumstantial reasons for the request: "And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee." The work could not now be abandoned on earth; the disciples were in the world, trained for the service for which they could be fully equipped by the gift of the Spirit through His own coming to the Father. So He prays the Holy Father, because He was coming to Him, to lay His hand upon them, to possess them in the truth, which is "Thy truth," to which the Spirit pertains. "Keep them in Thy name,"—the name of "Father,"—in the power of that name, owning them on earth as His own, in vital union with Himself, as Jesus had been owned,—"that they may be one even as We *are.*" The authority of the name Father revealed in their sonship would keep them henceforth and guard them from all harm, as it had kept and guarded them hitherto by the word and the presence of Jesus.

(*b*) THE SPIRIT AS A GIFT.

(John xiv. 16-24.)

In xiv. 16 Jesus declares that He would pray the Father to give the Spirit to the disciples—the Spirit that was ever to Himself the Father's gift. The Spirit is promised here as a divine gift to the disciples. In verse 26 He is referred to as perfecting them in the truth; in xv. 26 as enabling them to bear witness before a hostile world; and in xvi. 7-10 as giving them the victory over the world. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and shall be in you." Jesus calls the Spirit "another Comforter," that is an Advocate, or Supporter, which meaning the word "Comforter" bears when taken according to its derivation from the medieval Latin *confortare.* It would perhaps have been better to retain the word "Paraclete," for that word is also used of our Lord as an Advocate in heaven (1 John ii. 1). In this way the unity of the work of the Son and of the Spirit as advocates would be clearly expressed.

The Spirit is the Father's gift; the Son was God's gift to the world; the Holy Spirit is the gift of the Father to those who receive the Son. The Spirit was now with the disciples in one manner to enable them to receive Him in another. The word "with," in verse 16, signifies personal fellowship in unity of life,—a conscious personal presence,—and includes the meanings of the prepositions "with" and "in" in verse 17. The same prepositions are also used to express the immanent relations in the Godhead. He is said to be "with" or "by" the disciples, to enable them to receive Him personally. He is "with" them in order to be "in" them. He leads and draws unto Christ; He teaches the disciples to pray for Himself, and, dwelling in them, teaches them to pray for Pentecostal power. He gives faith, and is the promise of the Father given in answer to the faith of sonship. The manner of His presence depends on the nature of the faith possessed: "If there were only one gift of the Spirit, He would be the cause and the effect; by giving faith, the Scriptures ascribe to it the very gift which faith prepares for receiving."[1] His graces, such as love, faith, and obedience, are witnesses to the Father's gift and a proof of His presence.

The Spirit, as the Father's gift, is called "the Spirit of Truth": as such, it is said in verse 26, "He shall teach you all things," for He is the inward Teacher of the truth. Christ had said that He is the Truth and the Life, and now describes the Spirit as the revealer of that Truth to the faithful. The Spirit is in one manner what the Son is in another. In the Son we have the form, the image of the truth; in the Spirit we have the truth in power. "Eternity is in the Father, form in the image, use in the Gift."[2] This "use" is inward truth, love and blessedness. All these graces inhere in the Son, having in Him their substance; all have their worthiness revealed through the Spirit. The fulness is in the Son as an expression, and in the Spirit as an impression of the invisible God. The truth as it is in Jesus required the activity of the Spirit as an indwelling power in men, perfecting them in the knowledge of truth by His inward efficacy.

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[1] Calvin, *Inst.*, iii. 2, 33.

[2] Aug., *De Trin.*, vi. 10.

What is truth? Pilate's despairing question had been anticipated and answered by the self-revelation of Jesus. Yet the disciples, owing to their lack of spiritual understanding, were incapable of communicating His words and deeds in their true character to the world, until the Teacher came who could illumine their carnal minds and clear them of earthly conceptions. The Spirit conveys no new truth, but imparts vitally the truth as it is in Christ, enabling the disciples to proclaim it in such a way as to compel the world's attention. The Word and the Spirit are both needed for this full revelation; for the work of the Spirit is discerned only where Jesus Christ is; and there His light is, as it were, the reflection of His presence cast upon our darkness. When men seek the power of the Spirit apart from Christ, their zeal only leads them astray; but when they find that power in His presence, the very warmth of the emotions felt by them assists them to a clearer vision of the truth. The affections and the judgment work in unison, for the judgment apart from the heart cannot discern what is spiritually beautiful. Love sets its own value on its object—a value which none can prove to be too high; and service gives love its own worthiness.

The Spirit, as the Spirit of truth, may work a great change in a short time; yet generally the advance is gradual and by a normal growth. Every saving truth is many sided and capable of being interwoven with every faculty of the mind and the soul. One truth may also depend, in its growth, upon another; and truths apparently contrary to each other are often essential to one another. Similarly, graces react in their growth one upon the other, for in their progress they are inter-dependent. Some truths are seen more clearly in individuals, others are seen better in the Church as a community; but all interact so as to make manifest the many-sided wisdom of God. The history of the Church is the history of the words of Jesus, which are formative of its thoughts and works. would be interesting to be able to trace the influence of some one of these words in the battlefields won by it as the sword of the Spirit, in the eyes it has enlightened, in the hearts it has purified, in the evils it has removed, and in the spirits adorned by it. The master-builder takes up stone after stone, from the store that is in Jesus, to build up the whole temple in the Lord.

This gift of the Father the world cannot receive, for "it beholdeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." He must be known to be seen, for men must feel their need of the Spirit before they can desire Him and pray for Him. The world's treatment of the Son and of the Spirit is the same. When compelled to pay attention to Christ in the flesh or to the Spirit in believers, the world rejects the one and despises the other, for it "sees not, neither knows.' This is why the Jews could not see Jesus during the forty days before His Ascension: He could not be seen except by those who had the moral requisite of faith. His appearance to His enemies could only have been penal. The disciples, on the contrary, had had, through their personal contact with Christ, an experience of the Spirit, and after the resurrection it was said He "shall be *in* you." The Spirit in Christ was hidden from the world, but was revealed to the disciples as His glory. Now Christ is hidden in the Spirit, so that He is not seen by the world, and believers have their life hidden with Christ in God. In chapter xiv. 17 the words, "the world beholdeth Him not," are opposed to "He abideth with you," and "whom the world cannot receive" to "and shall be in you." He was "abiding" with them, striving in Jesus to become their aid in a more excellent way, to be *in* them, the great indwelling gift of regeneration.

The indwelling Spirit imparts the life of Christ, and therefore the Christian character cannot be understood except in the light of another personality, who is in and beyond it. A Christian man cannot be explained apart from Christ. Men are said to be in the Spirit so far as they participate in His operations. By this Spirit they are sealed as God's peculiar people, possessed and perfected by Him. On this high-priestly seal is written "Holiness to the Lord," or, "the Lord knoweth them that are His: and let every one that nameth the name of the Lord, depart from unrighteousness." The Shekinah appeared in Israel when the Lord glorified any habitation as His dwelling-place, and was an emblem of the Spirit, who could not dwell in our nature as long as it was unreconciled. In the redeemed He dwells in soul and body. The Evil One lusts after the body, and the Spirit strives for it also as a noble instrument in a great service. The Spirit is in the body as the pledge of its immortality. In that new life the body, bought and sealed for the restoration of all things, shall become the realised ideal of a sanctuary (Jer. xxxiii. 10).

Man cannot say "I," but "Thou and I" of the indwelling Spirit and himself; nor does the Spirit say "I" of Himself and man. Christ says "I" of Himself in our nature. Yet the union of the Spirit and man is so perfect that what the one does, the other also does. There is no self-limitation in the indwelling Spirit, who is the expression of the divine fulness, but there is a condescension by which He, in love, adapts Himself to each saint, operating in each according to his faith, his spiritual growth, as well as his natural endowments. All these He transforms into spiritual gifts, so that each believer becomes more and more what he was destined to be. Nothing is destroyed, everything is changed. Dwelling in sinful men, He is grieved, but not defiled by their sin; neither does the indwelling lessen man's responsibility, for two wills may act, the one in the other, without detriment to either.

Jesus then explains that the promise of the Spirit is fulfilled in the perfect union of the believer with His God, which gives him an assurance of the divine greatness and of the divine presence of our Lord. The Spirit in believers is the presence in them of Christ, who now says, "I come unto you." They were not to be left orphans, but His presence was to be such that His name would be distinctly impressed upon them. A little while and the world would behold Him no more, but the disciples would behold Him through their new life. Life sees its own end, and the kingdom of the new life is Christ, who is personally seen where His risen life is. "Because I live, ye shall live also," and "the living, he shall praise Thee." His risen life is a cause that is to be seen in its effect; it is a life that produces life. All longing to see Christ again in the flesh would yield to a mightier longing to see Him as He is. His disciples, by this vision of life, are to "know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." This threefold knowledge is given by the Spirit, who comes from the Son glorified in His Father, and who gives to the disciples a sense of their union with Christ as their highest interest, and of Christ's union with them on earth as His own great interest. The presence of Christ depends upon obedience to His mission. When He left His disciples He said "Go," and upon their going His perpetual presence depended: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Their life would be rooted in Christ, so that He would be manifested in their activity as an "ocean in a well, or a soul in an eye."[1]

This vision leads to another that is still greater. When standing by a mountain stream where it falls over the rocks, one often hears the roar of a greater fall higher up mingled with the sound of the nearer. He who loves Jesus with the self-denial of strenuous obedience will be loved of "My Father." The unique relation points to a higher participation of the divine love on the part of the disciples. In that case the Father's love towards the Son, who laid down His life, would flow over to them who yielded a similar obedience. By reason of this love of the Father the Son in turn will love the faithful with a still greater complacency: "I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." This manifestation is explained by Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18, where the word *ἐμφανίζων* is used in the Septuagint. Moses, who had had a vision of God, prayed for a yet higher vision, saying, "Show me Thy glory"—a prayer that could not be granted until Christ was risen from the dead; but this vision is now promised by the Lord. Judas's question why the manifestation was limited to the disciples gave Jesus an opportunity of explaining that the vision was given only to those who loved Him, and whose filial obedience gave the receptivity for the blessing: "My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The Trinity will make its "temple" in such a one, in a revealing presence, that will be a fellowship of the Trinity with man, and of man with the Trinity.

In the prayer Jesus says (xvii. 21-24) that the glory which the Father had given Him as the Son of man had been given by Him to His disciples, so that they could enter into a union of life with Him, as He was with the Father, and glorify Him as He had glorified the Father, and be themselves glorified with the glory of service. He also says, "Father, I will that, where I am they also may be with Me; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me." This is the glory that He now saw and prayed for, the glory which is the expression of the Father's love before the foundations of the earth, and which the regenerate behold as they participate in His risen life. This life is given by the Spirit of glory (1 Pet. iv. 14), who reveals the riches of His glory (Eph. iii. 16).

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[1] Morgan Llwyd.

(*c*) THE UNION THROUGH THE SPIRIT.

(John xiv. 20, xvii. 11, 20-23.)

The Spirit unites men with the Father and the Son, as also with one another. For this unity Christ prayed, and the mission with which He entrusted His disciples was to bring it into perfection. In every organic whole there is at the root a unity which, opening out by growth into a variety, issues in a fuller unity of interdependence and service. Jesus tells the disciples in xiv. 20, "in that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." This is the oneness for which He prays. Oneness with God will bring about the union of believers among themselves. When Jesus prays the Holy Father to keep the disciples visibly apart from the world and shielded by His name, He indicates the nature of their defence—a spiritual union with the Father: "that they may be one, even as We are,"—a union after the pattern of the heavenly union of the Father and the Son. Supported by the Spirit, He sends them into the world as He had been sent into the world, with the result that others shall believe. For these also Jesus prays, "that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us," so that the world may from age to age be brought to believe. Again, Jesus adds that He has given to them the glory of service, "that they may be one, even as We are One: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one."

All these passages show that the union is one with the Son and the Father, and the oneness is perfection, or true sonship. To be one, as the Father and Jesus are One, will keep the disciples from all harm. To be *in* the Father and the Son and the Spirit, or "in Us," assures the continuity of the mission of the Son in them; and the glory of the mission, through the trials of obedience, will be the means of perfecting the saints in a still higher oneness with Christ and with the Father in Christ, and thus they will finally be perfected in love with one another. Men are by nature "of one" (Acts xvii. 25) in virtue of their common life; there is also a solidarity of the spiritual life, a oneness of believers in Christ. The solidarity of the race comes to view by slow degrees and in various aspects through the ages. The Church also is in process of being perfected into one. This blessing the righteous Father—the Father who fulfils all true relations—will give to all whom He loves, forming them into a city compact of structure and perfectly proportioned in beauty, with God in the midst of it.

This oneness is often understood to be an outward visible union of men under the name of a particular Church, an outward uniformity. But this is to seek the living among the dead: for uniformity is death. The highest organism includes the greatest multiplicity of members. The highest organism of all is the true Church of God, which includes all nations, languages, schools of thought, grades of culture, sex and social status. Jesus says not that there is only one fold, but "one flock and one Shepherd." John saw men "sealed" from all the tribes of Israel. He also saw a throng that could not be numbered, yet distinctly known to be of all tribes, peoples, tongues—all redeemed, but all retaining their individuality. Every individual Christian stands distinct, as a star. Every faculty of body and soul in each testifies, in its own way and with its own tongue, to the mighty grace of God; not with one and the same voice, but in a harmonious concord of many voices. Christ is formed in every part of man; and in each individual the united praise of every part is as the "sound of many waters," with nothing lost, nothing silent, but all in full unison hymning the praises of God's grace.

The earth is beautiful in its variety of mountain and vale; the heavens also in the variety of suns and stars. Neither nature nor grace shows the mechanical and superficial uniformity which is by some considered so important for the success of Christianity. Any such vast outward organisation, even if it could be secured, would not, as such, produce faith in the world, nor love within its domain. A political or ecclesiastical organisation that claims to be the door to Christ denies the Spirit. Such an organisation can only be composed of earthly despotic powers, hunters of men, occupied in building Babel-towers to be the centres of dissension and spiritual strife. Compared with such superficial unity, a deep conviction of union with God is infinitely more powerful, though sometimes accompanied by narrowness of outlook. The living seek each other; they are of one mind, all striving for Christ.

These are they who are said to be "added unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 24), united to Him, as the Church itself is mystically called Christ (1 Cor. xii. 12).

In the creed the doctrine of the Spirit—the Lord's sign-manual in grace and the true succession of apostolic faith—is followed by the doctrine of the true Catholic Church. This Church includes all classes, leaders of men and leaders of thought; they who act, and they who wait and suffer,—all who have seen the heavenly things and strive to realise them. They are one with the assembly of the firstborn, with God, with Jesus, with the spirits of just men made perfect. The oneness follows where the unities exist—the one Spirit, the one life, the one Lord, the one faith, the one true confession, and the one God and Father of all. To insist upon uniformity is to change the incorruptible into the corruptible. It is to separate mind, conscience and heart from the one Father and the one Spirit, who alone can preserve from dissolution and decay.

Some of the Fathers went so far as to say that man is deified by the union. Some modern writers also speak of the humanity of the Godhead. There is a truth underlying both of these extreme statements. Men are said to be partakers of the divine nature, to be born of God, and to become like Christ. The tempter appealed to the noblest instinct of our nature when he said, "Ye shall be as God." God also said, "Let Us make man," and this word attained its end in the incarnation of Christ, and in the Spirit of glory, who forms men after that great Pattern. When the holy city is built and realised, therefore, a great voice from the throne will cry, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them" (Rev. xxi. 3).

(*d*) THE SPIRIT OF PERFECTION.

(John xiv. 26.)

Having explained the Spirit as the Gift which brings men into a union of life with Christ, Jesus describes Him in verse 26 as the One who is to make them perfect for their mission upon earth. The Father is now said to *send*, in the name of Jesus, Him who, in verse 16, was said to be given. Christ's own teaching was only preparatory: "But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. Peace I leave with you." The Spirit is here called *the* Holy Spirit, emphasising His holiness; and His mission is referred to the Father's love, which He would shed abroad in their hearts.

One is said to be "sent" when the character and will of another is manifested in him. The idea of mission, as applied to spiritual beings, is to act under conditions other than those that pertain essentially to the one sent. The Spirit condescends to operate in men under the conditions of the flesh. In men He nevertheless acts divinely, and consummates the mission of the Son. In men, and in men only, does the Holy Spirit dwell on earth. By men only may He be despised and blasphemed, as the Lord was while in the flesh.

He is sent in the name, in the personal authority, of the revealed Son, who came to earth and ascended on high with a purpose that must be accomplished: for all things were in Christ, and He is the substance of all. His will and purpose are present in the Spirit, who has the message in His own Person, and so has His mission from both the Father and Jesus Christ,—from the Father in the name of the Son, "He—that One—shall teach you all things." Jesus Himself is the "all things" that the Spirit teaches, and cannot be understood except by the inward teaching of another like unto Himself, because Jesus is of another order, as He said His disciples were (John xvii. 14). The teaching, therefore, is new and old. It is "the light of life" vitally and spiritually operating in the personal experience of His disciples. It is therefore a progressive teaching, and fully consistent with individual freedom. The truth is organic in Christ; and though particular truths have their time of manifestation in the history of individuals and in the Church at large, yet the organic truth ever abides. By the Spirit men have the "mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 13), and compare spiritual things with spiritual.

This teaching is not a persuasion nor an opinion, for it comes with authority. Jesus spake with authority, and this was one reason for the acceptance of the truth. He appealed to an innate moral sense with such conviction that the testimony of one from the dead was not equal to it (Luke xvi. 31). Similarly the truth taught by the Spirit is verified by the moral faculties with an authority that no other truth can command. He writes the truth on the heart: "It is necessary to love in order to know, and love is the door of truth,"[1] and they who are taught of God are taught to love; and, being knit in love, they are led "into all riches of the full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. ii. 23).

The living Christ is revealed only by the living Spirit. Yet it is in the nature of the dispensation that the spiritual should be seen veiled, both divine and human, inasmuch as

[1] Pascal.

man stands midway between the visible and the invisible. We see as in a mirror, knowing not yet as we are known. Our natural knowledge is essentially objective and subjective, and in it reason plays upon the perceptions of sense. The truth may be said to be objectively presented to the world in Jesus, subjectively through the Spirit. The truth presented outwardly alone would not profit; imparted inwardly by the Spirit, it is assimilated through faith.

The coming of the Spirit was a coming of age for the disciples, when they came to possess in use what they previously possessed of right. Life precedes thought; men must pass through one stage of life into another before they can fully understand the earlier stage. This teaching was to be given in the form of remembrance. In the process of thought, old impressions that lie dormant are quickened, and are apprehended as a possession which the mind had in store without knowing their value. We cannot so well remember that which is altogether new and alien to the mind as that which awakens some response in the impressions already formed. When the mind is thus prepared for the reception of truth, any stimulus—a word, a look, a need or a duty—may become the means of revealing unsuspected capacities of apprehension and knowledge. Jesus compares the change His disciples were to undergo to this experience. The old impressions of His words and works would appear enriched in a new light. The occasion might be the disciples' own need of personal progress in holiness, or the spiritual need of others; the result would be the awakening of old memories and the revelation of unsuspected truths.

The Spirit cast such light upon the life of Jesus that all things were made new. As occasion presented itself, the Spirit searched the deep things of God in the disciples, and gave them a resurrection in glory and power when they heard the voice of the living Christ saying, "I am with you, be not afraid." To separate the revelation of Jesus from that of the Spirit in these men is to fail to honour Him who gave them His glory, to make them His organs of revelation to the world. The Gospels were first written in men's hearts before they were written in a book: they were a life before they became a letter. The Spirit stirred within them unfathomable emotions of love, in the glow of which the truth shone as a pearl of great price. Therein lay the material out of which the Gospels were built, and the source from which the Epistles grew.

Memory is an important and efficient aid to spiritual growth. Logical thought, as it advances, reaches a point where truth appears in a new form. We observe progress even in the Gospels, and St. John's maturer spiritual growth enabled him to lay hold of material which earlier writers could not have used. A similar progress may easily be discerned in the later epistles of St. Paul: thus many a stone rejected by other builders found its place of honour. Youth sees visions; age dreams dreams. To the old, experience comes up full of new meaning, transfigured in aspect, and more true than before. Many silent perceptions serve as a bridge to a higher knowledge of Christ, and even restful faith involves spiritual activity. It is a common experience that mental difficulties which conscious study cannot solve are solved by some unconscious process of mind, such as in sleep. On the path of holiness a rest in the Lord, "who giveth to His beloved in sleep" (Ps. cxxvii. 2, margin), gives the needed help to those who are perfected by the Spirit. To the disciples, therefore, Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you."

Peace is the perfection of holiness, the well-being of the redeemed, the watchword of the kingdom, the strength of man which is mightier than all enemies. Christ, the Lord of peace, Himself gives peace (2 Thess. iii. 16). It is the one word which includes all that the risen Lord could give to His brethren (John xx. 19), the gospel of perfection, for it is the essence of the Gospel (Acts x. 36). God, as the God of peace, is He who sanctifies, perfects man wholly, bringing the whole man into perfection, preserving spirit, soul and body, each entire in every part (1 Thess. v. 23). When St. Paul has treated of justification and is entering on the subject of perfection, he says, "being justified, let us have peace" (Rom. v. 1). The God of peace is He who perfected the great Shepherd of the sheep, and "will make you perfect in every good thing to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight" (Heb. xiii. 20). Peace is the perfection of all things: "God hath reconciled all things unto Himself, having made peace." It has a mighty ruling power in love, which is the bond of perfection: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" (Col. iii. 15), and "the God of peace shall guard your hearts and your thoughts" (Phil. iv. 7). The kingdom is one of endless peace.

By its character of perfection, and as a life-power, peace is to the Christian a readiness to meet all foes (Eph. vi. 16). Christ gives not as the world gives, whose gifts of defence and honour are outward and transitory. The armour of His people is the power of life, a self-possession, a perfect equipment for the battlefield, where "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under *your* feet" (Rom. xvi. 20). Peace is the one word with which Jesus crowns the promise of the Spirit as the Father's gift of perfection; it is also the one word that connects the spiritual privileges of chapter xiv. with the inward and outward trials of the mission referred to in the following discourses, in which the King of righteousness is the King of peace, the true Melchisedek, King of Salem.

Jesus ends as He began: "Let not your heart be troubled." But now He adds, "neither let it be fearful," and commands them not to be faint-hearted. He goes and comes again in one act. Had they loved Him so as to understand Him, the disciples would have rejoiced because He was going to the Father: "For the Father is greater than I." Here He compares the state of humiliation with that of glory. The prince of the world was coming; but Jesus, in subjecting the flesh by the Spirit, had overcome him. The result of his coming would be that the world would know that Jesus loved the Father by His obedience unto death.

Whatever might have been the immediate intention of the last words, "Arise, let us go hence," they sound like a grand call to arms for Himself and His disciples: for now He, and they after Him, had to face the enemy.

XV.

THE MISSION OF THE SPIRIT.

JOHN XV.

(*a*) ITS SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS (vers. 1-17).

IN this chapter Jesus instructs His disciples concerning that fellowship with His sufferings which is found in bearing the Cross, the condition of sonship. To them, as to Himself, the Spirit was to come in power through mortification of the flesh and through faithfulness and patience. Moved by the contemplation of His own sufferings, now so imminent, the Lord explains the nature of suffering in seventeen verses, which run on without a single connecting particle. He explains how the mission of the Spirit was to enable Him to secure the fruit of His own mission. This result could only be attained through His disciples, who had been trained to become the spiritual representatives of Christ. Without men who believed in Him, Christ could not effect anything on earth after His departure; neither could believers do anything without Him. The disciples and Christ stood in need of each other. The two great questions are, "Shall the Son of man find faith on the earth?" and, Can we on earth find one to believe in? In order to show the mutual relation between Himself and His disciples, Jesus makes use of the symbol of Israel—the vine, which portrays its relation to

God, and which Ezekiel (chap. xv.) used also in an approximately similar sense. The sole purpose of the vine is to bear fruit, being otherwise useless except for burning. Other nations, as other trees, are useful, in their own way, for other purposes, but Israel, the disciples and the Church exist only in order to manifest Christ. Humanity is God's garden; and the vine in it is Christ and His disciples. Many think that the comparison was in some way suggested to Jesus at the time. We cannot be certain of this; but we know that He held in His hand at that hour a cup of wine, which, He said, signified His blood—His sacrificial life, destined to bear fruit in men.

This relation of stock and branches has various applications. There is, for example, the relation of the race to Christ, who is the root to which all are related. This relation is seen in a clearer light in all those to whom the Gospel comes, for their destiny is determined by the privileges which the Gospel brings. Those who hear the Gospel bear its impress; we cannot think even of Judas apart from Christ. Though a branch cast out, Judas was once a branch, and the mere thought of this connects him with Jesus. The true relation is grounded in faith, and grows as faith grows. By "fruit" we generally mean what supports life rather than what adds to its outward beauty. It contains the seed—the power of reproduction. It is also the end and the perfection of the tree. The Father is said to take away the unfruitful branches, and to cut off from the fruitful ones what hinders their usefulness,—the first an act of judgment, the other an act of love. The disciples were "clean," or capable of bearing fruit, because they had received "the words of eternal life." In order fully to realise the promise, and to grow into perfection, the disciples had to put forth strenuous efforts: "Abide in Me, and I in you." This effort to participate more fully in Christ would be answered by a similar effort on the part of the Spirit to reveal Christ's power in them. All their vital power would tend towards Christ; all the life in Christ would tend towards them, for henceforth His hidden glory would be seen in clusters of divine fruit, ripening on them as the branches, and constituting, on the one hand, their glory, their joy and their perfection, and on the other the sustenance of the world. The barren branches were to be cut off to wither; then they were to be gathered and cast into the fire.

If they abode in Jesus, His word would be a spiritual impulse in them, and manifest itself in their lives as fruit. This indwelling would produce such desires and longings as reach forward to a fuller life, energising the will in prayer and making it all-prevailing: "Ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." God, the Father of Jesus, would thus be glorified by their fruit, and they themselves would be approved as His disciples, because, "living in the divine and excellent, they would themselves become divine and excellent."[1]

For this unremitting effort love is needed, the reward of which is a greater love, with a greater capacity for service. The Father had loved Jesus in sending Him; Christ also loved the disciples as the Father had loved Him, and would likewise send them. By obeying love's command to lay down His life for the sheep, Christ was abiding in His Father's love; so the disciples, by the strenuous activity of the same love, would become conscious of being loved of Jesus. Self-sacrifice is the path to the joyful knowledge of the divine love. The great and the worthy ever suffer, for vicarious suffering is the universal law of sonship on earth. What the world saw only as the way of sorrow Jesus discovered to be the highway of joy; for He "for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross." The disciples also would find the joy of Christ in sorrow, and this joy would be then perfected in them as their own joy. Seeing the hardship which, because of the flesh, their mission entailed, Jesus prayed (John xvii. 13) the Father that He would confer upon the disciples His own joy. Dutiful obedience to Christ is the true fount of blessedness, and, in the synoptical gospels, is invariably associated with self-denial and persecution.

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[1] Plato.

This love of the Spirit is then further described as carrying with it power to lay down life for its objects. Jesus loved His disciples as friends; elsewhere it is said that He died for sinners. The Passion had a relation to sin and to the Spirit. It redeemed from the curse, and it enriched the life of the redeemed by the Spirit. The command of Jesus is "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." Peter was mistaken when he thought that he could die for his Lord before He had died for him; but afterwards, by the aid of His Spirit, he followed Him. Jesus called His disciples no longer bondservants, but friends: for their old natural condition had come to an end, and He was now, through His death, admitting them into the counsel of the Lord. Jesus chose them, and called them to the service of sons, where the reward of faithful service is to be entrusted with higher tasks. He was to depart from them unto the Father, they were to go from Him to the world; the one departure involved the other. The power that dwelt in Him would, by the ministry of the Spirit, work in them, and others would, from age to age, believe by their word. He had ordained them, and had given unto them, through the Spirit, a spiritual energy analogous to the natural power which the Creator gave to man to multiply and subdue the earth. The race shall not cease, neither shall the Church; "the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it," for the disciples would go, bearing fruit, and the fruit would abide, asserting its own existence from age to age. This fruitfulness would be their claim upon the Father's love, so "that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name He may give it you."

(*b*) THE SPIRIT IN PRAYER.

Prayer is referred to in xiv. 13, and is said to be based upon faith in the deity of Christ. Every prayer, presented in His name, God will answer. In xv. 7 the words of Jesus are stated to be the inspiration to prayer. In xv. 16 the love that obeys the commandments of Jesus causes the prayer in His name to the Father to be answered; and the answer, which before was an act, is now a gift, a gift to them personally, or something given in their favour, in the providential order of the world. In xvi. 26 it is implied that the prayer of Jesus for them would be the prayer of the Spirit in them.

The word "ask" is used by Christ of His own prayer, and "beseech" of the prayer of the disciples. The former word apparently emphasises the one who answers the prayer, the latter the object sought in the prayer. Prayer, as it is considered in these discourses, is the voice of the Spirit of sonship, the chief expression of the mission of the Spirit in believers, having its excellence in holiness,—the unity of heart and will with Christ; and where this unity exists there is no limit to its efficacy: "Ask what ye will." It is the voice of filial dignity, different in nature from any sense of merit, as it depends on kinship, and belongs to a sphere in which the reward is not merely what Christ can give, but what Christ is. It must, therefore, be in His name, in His Person and power, and kindled by His Spirit, as the incense was kindled by fire from the brazen altar before the veil (Exod. xxx. 1). It is a personal communion with a personal Father, a longing for a fuller unity of life, both contemplative and practical, a striving to do God's will on earth as Christ does it in heaven.

Divine goodness cannot dispense with prayer. It is not that man has to inform heaven of his needs, nor that prayer is desirable for the sake of its reflex action upon the mind. Prayer fulfils the law of sonship, the law of that kingdom whose order and beauty are not less glorious than the symmetry of creation, where wheel works within wheel to the exclusion of all caprice. This law is illustrated in Jesus. He prayed by the Spirit, who before had descended upon Him full of graces from heaven. What the Son of man so received ascended again in His prayer, and was sealed for execution upon earth. This power it had not before the prayer. The will of God and the prayer of the Son of man were both needed for the will to be done on earth. Jesus prayed the Holy Father to sanctify His disciples, because they were not of the world, but called out of it for service; and as hitherto He had done nothing without the Father, nor the Father without Him, so neither would He henceforth do anything, in carrying on His mission, except through the disciples. Their oneness with Him was needful in order that the world might believe. The Spirit would take the counsel of heaven, and, by the revealed word, convey it to their minds in prayer, which, inspired by the Spirit, and through Him ascending in "the name" (*i.e.* with the authority) of Christ, would be sealed as a divine decree to be carried out on earth. For the fulfilment of this decree "length of time, scope and opportunity" may be needed because of the solidarity of God's government. During this seeming delay men may cry, "Lord, how long!" Nevertheless the influence of men, by the Spirit of prayer, stands as an ordained force in the mediatorial kingdom of Christ. Men are therefore co-workers with God through prayer, which is a travail and a victory.

When the Spirit so unites man with the heavenly counsel, he prays with a boldness inspired of love (1 John iii. 22), and, by the prayer itself, he receives the substance of his desire in the consciousness of oneness with the divine Will, a union in which the mightier love rules the weaker. "We know that we have the petitions which we have asked of Him" (1 John v. 15). Prayer is often said to belong to the childhood of the race. Its principle is indeed seen in that stage; yet, when perfected in the consciousness of sonship, it looks forward with a hope that is co-ordinate with the highest exercise of man's personality. As a man grows in holiness, his prayer grows richer, serving him more and more, as a prophetic inspiration that lifts him above the limits of what is seen to that which is eternal.

Prayer in the Spirit has therefore something to say to Nature and Providence. The throne of grace is the throne of the universe, and God's right hand of power, upon which our Lord sits, is everywhere. In this connection we find the fulness of the Spirit, called by John the "seven spirits of God which are before the throne" (Rev. i. 4, iv. 5), possessed by Christ as King (Rev. iii. 1), and sent forth into all the earth (Rev. v. 6). The seven spirits pervade all things in creation and Providence, subordinating all to the kingdom of grace. Christ in these passages is spoken of as "He which is, was and is to come," the One before whom everything bows and breaks forth into praise, and the One who is found worthy to open the book of God's redeeming purposes,—for "Thou wast slain,"—who also receives the incense which is the prayers of the saints, redeeming them who reign upon the earth.

The passage on prayer in Romans viii. 26-28 comes after the description of the community of interest between the perfection of the sons and the perfection of all creation, which, in its great birth-travail, expects its deliverance, through the manifestation of the sons, "into the liberty of the glory of the children." The sons also are now in distress, in which the Lord succours them by the Spirit, who "helpeth our infirmity"; "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought" when in dire distress. Our Lord's prayer in the garden was, "If it be possible," and, "not as I will." Under such circumstances the Spirit *Himself*, in us, although apart from our knowledge, "maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." A sigh goes forth as a breathing, as the resting "of a weaned child with his mother" (Ps. cxxxi. 2). The heart has a higher knowledge than the mind can comprehend. The sigh is a prayer known to God, who knoweth the mind of the Spirit, "because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Those who pray by the Spirit are in the centre of things, with their weak hand placed on the almighty pierced hand that rules all and causes all things to "work together for good." A supernatural kingdom is evolved within the natural, with higher laws than those of nature; and the Lord by His Spirit works "through all and in all":

> "Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
> Spreads undivided, operates unspent."[1]

Men may pray for all things. There can be no general providence unless it be also special, nor special unless it be part of a whole. Christ taught men to see the Father in all things in nature, which supplies a parallel to prayer in the cry of the offspring to the instincts of the parent. Nature becomes richer to man as he advances in knowledge, and so does God's grace as he advances in holiness. Man does his little, and God includes it in His greater work, and the united result falls naturally into a great and perfect order. Our era is that of redemption, in which, however dark the prospect, "where sin abounded, grace abounds more exceedingly."

In the answer to the prayer of the Spirit all laws are honoured in their order. It would be well for men to be as zealous for the immutability of moral and spiritual as for that of natural laws. Any ordinary event is the resultant of many kinds of laws, conditioning one another and being conditioned by one another, so that a description of the event may be given under the aspect of any one out of the number. History may be written from many points of view, all different, yet all true. Each law has a proximate and also a higher end. The kingdom of Christ rules all spiritual focres, so that men may ask any thing, submitting themselves to God's will, and saying, "Thy will be done."

In these discourses prayer is intercessory. Love includes others, and the believer prays for them as well as for himself; and such prayer will avail, unless the one prayed for be as dead (1 John v. 16): for when all relationship ends, prayer ceases. Intercessory prayer is the priesthood of believers. It cries, "Our Father," the expression of the unity of men by the Spirit with God, the unity through which the kingdom comes and His will is done on earth.

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[1] Pope.

(*c*) THE SPIRIT OF PATIENCE.

(John xv. 18-26.)

Love, abiding in Christ, and clinging to Him with the instinct of self-preservation in endurance, is patience. It is the virtue of the great, who inherit the earth, and is the source of their blessedness. Sustained by hope, it overcomes all difficulties, and derives strength from the very conflict; for God places in temptation itself a door that opens into joy, never permitting the trial to be greater than man can bear. Christ gives His disciples an assurance both of their own spiritual perfection through suffering, and of the power to become, with the Spirit, witnesses for Him. Jesus tells them that the world will of necessity hate them, for it hated Him as their Head. This would be for them a sure proof that they were not of the world, for the world is not in the habit of hating natural goodness, but loves it as its own with such affection as is natural to it. It instinctively hates the denial of self, the mastery of spirit over flesh, which is the way of salvation. The world, in the exercise of its instincts of hatred, is often keener to see who are the servants of Christ than the servants themselves are. Their union with Christ would not exempt the disciples from suffering, because "the servant is not greater than his Lord." Where the world persecuted Christ it would persecute them; where Christ found faith, there would they also find it. The grief and the comfort would be so intertwined that where they were persecuted by unbelief, there also their testimony would bear its fruit.

Jesus explains, further, that the root of this hatred lay deeper than the world itself knew; yet the Spirit would disclose its hidden sources. Its visible hatred of Christ, or of individual men, is only a symptom of its hatred of the invisible Father. Sin, the denial of redeeming love, is unveiled as man's own personal choice. The Jews had heard the saving words, and had seen the works, which were the witnesses to Christ; yet they hated these witnesses because the words and the works were salvation from sin. By hating their very salvation, the Jews fulfilled what was written in their own law,—"They hated me without a cause" (Ps. xxxv. 19),—and were therefore left without excuse. The world consciously hates only what it sees; yet in reality the Father was hated in the Son. Christ also, though not seen, is still crucified anew in men. This hatred of the Father and the Son "despitefully uses" the Spirit also in the persons of believers. Endurance of manifold trials would give joy to the disciples as to men proved with a divine purpose. The outward course of men's lives is wonderfully adapted, even in its minutest details, to train, form and chisel the divine image in men, or to prove their guilt. A believer, by the patience of faith, is thus enabled to attain the summit of his excellence.

The secret of a Christian's life lies in the use of, rather than in freedom from, afflictions,—such use of them as makes their destructive powers subservient to the birth of a higher self. The Stoics tried to stifle the sensibilities of human nature, yet the sparks ever flew upwards, and witnessed to the unquenchable furnace below. The sensibility of the nature grows more acute by holiness, with the result that earthly afflictions are felt all the more keenly. The great discovery of Christianity is how to use all suffering for spiritual ends, that we may bear "the dying of Jesus in the body, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body" (2 Cor. iv. 10). Christ set before Himself the task of bending all the powers of death into ministers of eternal life. Many trials become many joys; love is compatible with sorrow, and glory with a cross. Afflictions break many idols and give men the Father; the baptism of strong cries and tears becomes the baptism of power, since they who bear the reproach of Christ are "blessed, because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon them" (1 Pet. iv. 14).

The narrative of the three men cast into the fiery furnace (Dan. iii. 20-26) is a parable of the true Jewish Church, and serves to illustrate the work of the Spirit in those who abide in Christ. The three men were thrown into the furnace bound, when lo! four men were seen freely walking in fellowship together in the midst of the fire, and "the form of the fourth was like the Son of God." Believers meet afflictions and trials as a grim necessity of bondage. The first effect of the furnace is to loose their bonds, whereat another appears in free communion with them, and they with one another, in the very furnace itself, and the aspect of the fourth is divine. Freedom, fellowship with God and with one another—these are the special Christian graces whose growth tribulation is overruled to subserve.

(*d*) THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT (ver. 26).[1]

In this verse the Spirit is described as the Helper who would guard the disciples from "the terror by night." He is said to be "sent," and this word points to His coming on a mission to the world,—sent by the Son, proceeding from the Father. The sending of the Spirit proves that the temporal mission is the reflection upon earth of a divine agency and of the power of the mediatorial kingdom. "He—that One," shall bear witness; "and ye also." They are inseparable from Him, yet to be distinguished. The witnesses are personal,—both the Spirit and the men. The message in the disciples includes their whole life, and specially indicates the mighty operation of the Spirit of truth in revelation and inspiration. Reforming power ever dwells in persons—in men who become the levers of humanity, the makers of its history, and the founders of its religions. The power of each person's testimony is Truth. The Psalmist says God covers Himself "with light as with a garment." Christ is Truth incarnate, and the Spirit is His light, which made the disciples, by gifts and graces, "witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth." Gifts and graces are allied to each other, yet they are not the same. Every grace contains a latent gift, yet gifts are said to be outside the Church. They are the means of its edification rather than, as graces are, essentials of its existence. The witness of the Spirit by supernatural gifts, such as miracles, may appear to be independent of the disciples, their sphere being Nature and Providence; yet they were not so, because power issued forth from the disciples which was itself a miracle or a prophecy. Peter referred to such signs when he said, "We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit" (Acts v. 32). This is the law of revelation, which came as an inward and immediate act of God, accompanied by visible acts in Nature or Providence.

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[1] See also p. 55.

In order to be a witness to a thing, a man must have a special cognisance of it; whereas one may bear a message, attest the character of the sender, and deliver it with its known customary seal of authenticity, without being a witness. The saints of old, who saw visions, were messengers rather than witnesses, inasmuch as they did not themselves represent the sender, by having the message in themselves, as their own. The true witnesses, under the Old Testament, were the Law and the words of the prophets. The true witness, under the New, is Christ, who said, "Believe on Me," rather than, "Believe Me." To Him the disciples bare witness, testifying to what they had seen and heard, having first followed Him to see where He dwelt, and having found that He was in the Father.

(*e*) INSPIRATION.

The mission that testifies to Christ includes inspiration as one of the greatest operations of the Spirit in the disciples. The difficulties that attend the doctrine of inspiration are those which attend any conception of union between the human and the divine. The gift was ever in persons, forming them into a class—patriarchs, prophets and apostles. The unique character of the gift lies in its spiritual nature, in its particular relation to each person called to be a teacher from God, with its necessary conditions in each case, and also in its ethical intention. It was accompanied by abnormal effects in the natural state of men before the Holy Spirit came, yet even in their case "God, when He made the prophet, did not unmake the man."[1] The truth pressed into its service the man's personality, so that we may discover his distinctive character, knowledge, period and even the degree of his spirituality, which ever varies according to the nature of the truth which he reveals. The Spirit never degrades the instrument which He uses to the condition of a machine, neither does He lift man wholly above his natural limitations, but honours him in the service; and as a master-player wakens the latent possibilities of the instrument he plays upon, so the Spirit glorifies the person whom He makes the organ of His revelation.

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[1] Locke.

We have seen that the Spirit brought up in the memory of the disciples the words once spoken, together with their setting in the narrative, as "apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv. 11). The formal reason of their being chosen to be witnesses is that they had been with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry. The number of such men was small, and soon none such would be found. We find the apostles able to fill the gap which was made by the fall of Judas, but they failed to fill the vacant place when James was martyred. The apostolate could not be perpetuated; for, according to the nature of things, there could be no successors to those who were the foundation built upon the chief corner-stone itself. Jesus spake in these men by His Spirit, so as to convey to them the whole truth (John xvi. 13). This could not be until after the truth was perfected and the disciples had been taken into union with Christ, so as to become living witnesses. So in Acts i. 1 we find it said that what Jesus had Himself done and taught, that would He continue to do and to teach more fully by the Apostles.

As in Christ, so in the Apostles, there was no ecstasy, no abnormal elevation. All taught; some also wrote. The teaching of some of them was written by others, and one writer says that he diligently collected such narratives as had been delivered by eye-witnesses, collating and arranging them, all in the most simple and human manner, as the needs of the Church called for them. The gift operated naturally, yet with the Spirit's assurance of authority ; and the Apostle Paul distinguishes between what he wrote as one who had been found faithful, and what he delivered as one called to be an apostle (1 Cor. vii. 25). The greatness of the gifts vouchsafed to the apostles, who were the creative minds of a new era, may be clearly discerned by comparing their writings with those which belong to the ages that followed, and which merely quote the apostolic teaching.

Sin indeed still dwelt even in inspired men ; and "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ?" But in every one who is holy there is a principle that sins not, a centre of unsullied purity, an uncontaminated core, which gives the man his holy character. But the message is to a sinful world, and of the sinfulness the messengers had to be conscious. Jesus, through His own redeeming love, knew the needs of the world as none else could know them. Men must be themselves redeemed before they can adequately know the heinousness of sin and the greatness of the love that saves them from it.

The truth grew in the mind of the inspired men with such light and authority as proved it to be infallible. It was truth in themselves, carrying with it the ultimate test of all truth—namely, the self-contradiction involved in its denial. The message came to the messenger on its way to others, constraining him with regal authority to convey it. The mind of the hearer responded to this authority, so that, when it was received, the force, the nature and the intention of the word were acknowledged. St. Paul states that inspiration lay in the intention of the word spoken, which possessed the power to make men wise unto salvation, furnishing them completely unto every good work. The nature and intention of every scripture is, that it is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness" (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16).

Infallibility is not formal, so that man's natural reason can perceive it and appeal to it. Such objective authority degrades rather than elevates man's moral nature. Far less is it a matter of figures, dates, authenticity, absolute knowledge beyond the age of the writer, or any mechanical perfection. It is a power felt in conscience, and verified in the heart that believes. There are weaknesses of the flesh which are not sinful, being merely marks of limitation. Supposed errors, however, should be carefully and patiently investigated, as, generally speaking, they have their foundation in the reader; for it is wonderful how full of meaning, when scrutinised, are the minutest details of Holy Writ.

Inspiration gave to words a new dignity, and this is clearly discerned when the words of inspired writers can be compared with those used in other writings of the same language and age. The words of Scripture are neither ornate nor technical after the manner of the language of the schools, but are simple in style, and may be translated easily into all other languages without any perceptible loss of spiritual intention or power. The Bible is the deposit of centuries, layer on layer of thought, built rock-like on immovable foundations, Jesus Christ Himself being the golden vein of unity throughout. In the progress each part is both new and old, for each prophet—even Christ Himself and His apostles—has his own distinctive way of teaching, based upon what had been previously given in word or deed. Mere restoration of the past is a sign of decadence; vital resemblance to the past may involve advance upon it. Revelation restores what is old by renewing it, as the earth is renewed each year. The truth springs up in every faculty of the inspired soul; the reason is exercised, the imagination dreams its dream, conscience promulgates its law. One prays a prayer to be prayed by myriads; another sings a song to be sung by all ages. One gathers what has been given in prose or in poetry, and another arranges them; yet through all the Spirit operates, with the result that Scripture contains more true thought than all the schools. Nevertheless, to the natural man it may not be so pleasant to read, owing to the searchings of heart which it causes and the spiritual demands it makes upon the conscience, and the bitter sense of sin and guilt which it brings to the heart.

The Church, by accepting certain books as authoritative, only acknowledged the decision of faith, without adding anything either to the writings or to their authority. Faith found in them its nourishment, and, seeing them to be goodly, it treasured the words as the gifts of God. Both in the Jewish community and in the Christian Church there existed, concerning some of the writings, a measure of uncertainty which gradually ceased. They who received the witness "set their seal to this, that God is true." There are degrees in inspiration, as in other gifts; for the writings vary in their spiritual value according to the character of the writers and their age. Yet these writings were soon referred to by friend and foe alike, so that they could not be wilfully tampered with.

Literary criticism of the books of the Bible stands on a plane other than that of their spiritual power, inasmuch as criticism deals but with the form, whereas faith deals with the voice it hears in the form. The aim of criticism may often be to destroy faith; its result has invariably been to confirm faith. The Christ who conquered the world was rejected of men; the Church, under fierce persecutions, has always had its foundations strengthened. Likewise, the Scriptures are safe, whatever criticism may do. It was they that gave liberty to the world, including even the liberty of enquiring into themselves. We may therefore rest assured that the more the word is trodden upon, the more will its perfume spread abroad. When any Christian man is troubled in heart, and unable to rebut criticism by argument, let him rest in faith, saying, "Whether He be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see," and plant his foot on the infallible rock of Christian experience, the safe anchorage of trembling souls amid all billows of doubt and unbelief. The persons only were inspired; the spiritual authority gave the message assurance, which faith apprehends. To deny either the human side or the divine leads astray; faith sees both united.

That there are degrees in the operation of the witnessing Spirit in men is also proved by the use of the words "receiving," "filled with," and "full of" the Spirit. The Spirit is given in absolute subjection to His own mode of operation, as well as according to the conditions of faith, such as love and abiding in patience, on the part of believers; but He is never given in subjection to man's will. The lives of all who sailed with St. Paul were assured; and yet it was said, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved" (Acts xxvii. 24, 31). When love grows cold a saint becomes like a vessel becalmed on the ocean. An empty house, even the partially empty, affords room for other tenants than the Spirit of Christ, and man may soon seek his vital warmth from strange fires. When the essentially spiritual conditions are present, their reward will not fail them; and yet it will be given in a higher degree, if it be not of a higher nature, to those who offer a whole heart and an undivided will to the Spirit.

The two words that express this spiritual abundance are "filled" and "full." To be "filled" points to the influence as possessing the whole man, but only temporarily, or at least with a view to some special occasion, as, for example, to enable a believer to speak or to act with power, and in a way that was suitable to the occasion, either for guidance or defence. The word "full" points to a more permanent operation, as in the case of a man who is acknowledged to be "full of wisdom and power," and stands foremost among his brethren, like one whose dial tells the hour distinctly, while those of others barely cast any shadow at all. In such a case "a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of waters in a dry land, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. xxii. 2).

The mark of both the "filled" and the "full" is power, which is within the reach of all, for all are exhorted to pray for it, yea, to strive to be filled, for in the kingdom of heaven there is no equality of power along with inequality of faith. They who are possessed thus of spiritual fulness become free from the power of sin. They have reached the calm and joyful heights, where the one great influence, as a shepherd, guards and guides all thoughts, powers and ideals along the path of the "fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

Believers generally are said to be sealed by the Spirit. This sealing gives them the assurance of faith. The seal gives validity and affirms proprietorship; it confers worthiness, dignity and power of service, as well as an assurance of full and final redemption. Heaven has given itself as the pledge within men that their perfect salvation is assured. When men permit this seal to be obscured, the Spirit is said to be grieved; when the seal is clear and bright, it is the assurance of faith.

XVI.

THE SPIRIT OF VICTORY.

John xvi.

FOREARMING His disciples rather than forewarning them, Jesus speaks in the beginning of this chapter of coming persecutions, clearly describing their nature, and stating that He would no longer be present to combat them. The disciples would be cast out of Israel ; the perverted conscience of their own people would condemn them as accursed, and to persecute them even unto death would be regarded as a service to God. Bereft of all they held precious, and finding the conscience of the world against them, the disciples might be offended, unless they were enabled to discern clearly the excellency of Christ. In the hour of their distress—the predetermined time—they would remember His prophetic words, and He Himself would be seen illuminating their sorrows with His glory, and proving that now, as of old, "the Lord is a man of war," a sanctuary for His own, and a rock of offence for unbelief.

The mission of the Son must have its reward in still greater blessings. But the hearts of the disciples were so stunned by sorrow that they no longer by their enquiries afforded Jesus an opportunity of explanation. Deep sorrow is silent. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the

Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto you." Here Jesus states that if He went not away by death, the Comforter would not come unto them. The willingness of Jesus to die was also the willingness of the Spirit in Him to come in power. The Spirit is here spoken of in direct relation to the death and the glorification of Christ, and His mission is presented not as expressing the Father's love, but as revealing the power of Christ to the world. Although their Lord was no longer visibly with them, the Spirit in the disciples was to conquer the world. Jesus was now being taken away, and the disciples knew not where nor how to find Him. Repeatedly throughout the ages He, after coming in the Spirit, appears to be going away; but His departure is only a preparation for His coming again in another manner. It is the universal law of progress, in natural, mental, and spiritual growth, that one stage should pass away in order that another may come, and the transition is generally accompanied by sorrow.

(*a*) Victory by Conviction (vers. 8-11).

"And He, when He is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." "To convict" is a judicial term. It expresses an inward process within men in John iii. 20, an objective presentation of sin as a charge in John viii. 46. In Ephesians v. 13 it expresses the manifestation of an object by the light; in Hebrews xi. 1 it is an indubitable evidence; and in 1 Corinthians xiv. 24 its mode of operation in salvation is described by the supposed case of a stranger who enters the assembly and hears himself judged by all. The secrets of his heart being disclosed, he falls down, bows his head, covers his face, and worships God, confessing "that God is in you truly." "The word 'conviction' involves the conception of authoritative examination, of unquestionable proof, of decisive judgment, and of punitive power. Whatever the issue may be, he who convicts another places the truth of the case in dispute in a clear light before him, so that it must be seen and acknowledged as the truth."[1] The Paraclete Himself is here said to convict the world, as He alone has the power to do; the disciples, by whom He acts, are "hidden in the covert of His presence." The language is judicial, and the three subjects mentioned constitute the essential factors of every judicial process: sin being the cause, righteousness the standard, and judgment the result.

By the witness of the Spirit in the disciples, sin is shown as a present active power, directly inimical to the redeeming love of God, and is proved to be an act not merely of folly, but of guilt. In the exalted Saviour man finds his law on a more awful height than that of Sinai. He finds that his sin crucified the Lord of glory. When man believes, the scene is transfigured into one of pitying love that seeks the sinner, and the power of the throne stands by him as his supporter. By this divine sovereign agency forgiveness is proclaimed, and man enters into the Lord's rest, where the judicial power of the throne condemns the sin that dwells in his flesh, casting it out in judgment. If the call is rejected, the unbelief is an evidence of guilt, and the Spirit who saves becomes the agent of penal retribution.

The word is the means of producing conviction. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews states that the word has been preached as a gospel in every age, the living word of the living God, active and vigorous, which like a piercing sword cuts for itself a way to the innermost recesses of the soul. Penetrating into the core of personality, it divides the soul and the spirit, the joints and the marrow, activity and receptivity, judging, separating, classifying, so that the last shall be first and the first last, as by a moral revolution. The word is the sword of the Spirit, and salvation or final separation is the inevitable result, for He will convict the world, and to convict the world is to conquer it.

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[1] Westcott, *in loc.*

The three cardinal points in respect of which the conviction is wrought are presented, first of all, in their absolute nature, as sin, righteousness and judgment, distinct yet inseparable. Righteousness is what reveals the nature of sin and includes judgment. Sin belongs to the world, judgment to the prince of the world, righteousness to Christ as One who goes to the Father, uniting our nature to God in glory, and God to the disciples, who being on earth shall behold Christ no more. These three principles of conviction are explained in their order in the Sermon on the Mount, in which the nature of sin is first explained; then that of righteousness; and, finally, that of judgment.

The three are related to the mediatorial offices of our Lord,—sin to the prophet's office, righteousness to the priestly, judgment to the kingly. Christ is presented to the world as the absolute Truth, as the standard of all true religion, and as the Eternal King. To deny Him is to deny divine perfection in the flesh, the perfect union of man with God, and the Name to which every knee shall bow.

In the economy of the kingdom, as in the experience of individuals, the three convictions are progressive, throwing a light in turn on the nature of sin, on the essence of true religion and on future destiny. The conviction reveals, first of all, Christ in the flesh, then His exaltation, and finally His second coming. In salvation, sin is overcome by faith, righteousness is revealed by faith unto faith, and attains perfection by casting out sin in judgment. The three, being absolute, are final. The sin of unbelief is sin against redeeming love, and so is without excuse; the righteousness is perfect salvation; and from the judgment there is no appeal.

None but the Spirit can convict of these three, which are hidden and spiritual in their nature. The sin of unbelief cannot be recognised as a sin except by the light of the Spirit. The righteousness is a mystery which He alone can reveal. The judgment is a process of which the world is not cognisant. The convictions are continuous, and interpenetrate one another, so that growth or decay in one is a sure sign of growth or decay in the others. Armed with these powers, the disciples can face the arguments of the world, its selfishness, its promises, its derision, its prisons, its gyves and its scaffolds, and be confident of ultimate victory, because where man comes to see sin he sees grace, and where he sees grace he sees a throne. Julian's cry must be the cry of the whole world: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean."

(i) *Conviction of Sin* (ver. 9).[1]

"Of sin, because they believed not in Me." The word "because" in this verse signifies "in that" or "seeing that," and Jesus shows the cause, the ground of the conviction. He claims God's prerogatives in such a way that to reject Him discloses the true nature of sin, its root and its wages. Law cannot manifest sin in its enormity; it is love that unmasks it and detects its secret nature and its insidious workings, as it taints every breath that man breathes. Society knows the sins that destroy its own well-being. Its laws and its customs are intended to check them, but they do that only very partially, and often all that education does is to change the form of sin without eradicating it.

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[1] See Chapter VIII., on "Faith."

The crucifixion of Christ is the central act of the sin of the world, and unbelief in every age partakes of the character of that act. Unbelief is a denial of divine goodness and of man's greatness as created in the image of God, and of his filial relation to God. It was the essence of the first sin, and is the continuous, active power in disobedience. Unbelief contains in itself the germ of every sin, and is therefore the greatest, the ultimate sin. Christ is in the gospels exhibited to the view of all men, and from Him beam forth the excellency of love and the eternal necessity of obedience which work conviction in man. Unbelief in Him when in the flesh is not as culpable as unbelief in Him when revealed by the Spirit; and to sin against the Son of man, who had the Spirit, is not the same as to resist the Spirit of the Son of God. The heights are greater and the shadows are deeper. The appeal by the Spirit is mightier, directed as it is to every faculty in man. To reject the witness of the Spirit is to undermine all righteousness, while the righteousness of faith fulfils all relations. When man sees Jesus, well may he say, as Richard is said to have cried out when he saw Jerusalem: "If I am not deemed worthy to possess thee, I am not worthy to see thee." The disciples by the Spirit preached in "the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4), whose unity with the Father and with them was such "that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me" (John xvii. 21).

By faith the condescension of Christ is seen in the light of His glory, in which pity and terror, sorrow and fear meet. Repentance comes from this vision, and therefore from the throne, the fount of power and forgiving love, working godly sorrow, "which bringeth no regret" (2 Cor. vii. 10). The sinner, who sees Him whom his sin rejected, sees Him also as the One who loved him to the uttermost (John xiii. 1), and he now begins to sympathise with the sorrows of his Lord through a sense of relationship which springs from the sacrifice and pierces the heart with sorrow. Peter wept, going apart as a stricken deer from the herd, when he saw his sin in the light of his Lord's pitying eye. Judas wept not, but, throwing the thirty pieces into the holy place, and so desecrating it, rushed to his doom; for he had not the sense of relationship to Christ. The sinner who is convinced of sin sees Him who died as Him who ever lives, and, in the act, receives repentance unto life, whereby his life is baptised with the spirit of service. Whosoever refuses so great a salvation is himself refused, there being no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and a fierceness of fire—the wath of the Lamb. This is said to be "without compassion" from any direction, for the conviction is perfect, and "the robe of sin is scarlet."

(ii) *Conviction of Righteousness* (ver. 10).[1]

"Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more." In the matter of righteousness, or true religion, the case would stand upon these two statements: "I go to the Father," which signifies the death of Jesus as it was related to the Father; and, "*Ye* behold Me no more," which points to the glorification of Jesus in God. In consequence the righteousness of

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[1] See Chapter XI., on "Worship."

God in the disciples is not a visible and an earthly one, but essentially spiritual. He takes away the earthly in order to establish the heavenly. The religions of the world have no righteousness except an earthly one. The spirit that of old divided light from darkness now divides the righteousness of the world from the divine righteousness.

The justification of Jesus implies that His human character is placed before the world in its true light—a truth which is here accessory to the main thought. The world judged Him as it ever judges the righteous, because He reproved its doings, and "made it His boast that God was His Father." Of such a One the world will say, when He is seen in the true light, "This was He whom we had in derision; we fools accounted His life madness and His end to be without honour."[1] Jesus may be considered as One who died a martyr's death. Yet death for a good cause is not in itself righteousness; neither does the fact that the world judges the righteous suffice to prove that no righteousness whatsoever can be attained by the world. But the righteousness of Christ judges the righteousness of the world to be sinful. When those objects, ends and motives which are regarded as the essential factors in human excellence and religion are condemned, men consider those who so judge to be fools, madmen, dangerous to society, unpatriotic and inhuman. The righteousness of the world can condemn the prodigal son. But the righteous world itself is the elder brother, who thinks that he is in the father's household and fully occupied in his affairs, whereas he is in fact estranged. The Church of His day, the educated classes and the political powers all joined hands in the crucifixion of Christ, in putting to death Him who is the source of all religious life, of all progressive thought and of a world-conquering power.

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[1] Wisdom ii. 16, v. 3-5.

"Righteousness" in Israel was a covenant relation with the nation, the source and the end of its existence. The word is used collaterally with "salvation" in the Prophets: "My righteousness is near, My salvation is gone forth" (Isa. li. 5, xlv. 8). It was the divine ideal and the strength of Israel, against which no weapon formed could prosper. It condemned every accusing tongue "that shall rise against Thee in judgment." It was the heritage of the servants, whose righteousness "is of Me, saith the Lord." This righteousness of Israel is the same in principle as the oneness of man with God, and of God with man in Christ and the Spirit. It is the righteousness of true sonship, whereby the justice and the faithfulness of God become the ground of forgiveness of sin and of perfection in holiness (1 John i. 9). It is the disciples' defence in manifold temptation, even though they have not beheld Christ, "whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though ye now see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorified; receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of souls" (1 Pet. i. 8).

The righteousness of Christ is His perfected sonship. In believers also it is sonship and the witness of eternal life, which God gives them in the Son (1 John v. 11). The Priest who died is the King who rules, and who is, "from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made the footstool of His feet." In Christ righteousness is the power that overcomes all, convincing the world that Jesus is the Christ, "whom the heavens must receive because it was not possible that He should be holden of death." Christ ascended not to the spiritual sphere of worship, but to Him who is the object of worship. He is "the

Lord of our righteousness," because He went to the Father.

The words "and ye behold Me no more," while undermining all the national expectations of the disciples, were full of comfort, and signified an essential element in the righteousness. Men cling to the carnal desire for a visible Christ, so that some, even in the Lord's Supper, materialise the very death that took Him from view into a supposed medium of beholding Him. Had the words implied no more than spirituality of existence, their import would have been great. But they mean more; for it is implied that the High Priest, who passed through the veil into the sanctuary, returns no more into the domain of sin and death. His righteousness involves perfect union with God in glory, constituting Him Light of light, and equal with God. From the throne He surveys the whole battlefield, and, though not seen, He is ever "ready to succour His people out of the city" (2 Sam. xviii. 3), and by the breath of His mouth He convinces the world that its righteousness is sinful.

(iii) *Conviction of Judgment* (ver. 11).[1]

"Of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged." This conviction is the synthesis of the two previous ones, because He who is the Lord of conscience and the true Priest must be also the King who judges. Hitherto particular sins had been judged, but in Christ the embodied principle of sin was condemned. The teaching of Christ and of the apostles emphasises two things that bear upon this conviction: first, the terrors of judgment, which His teaching sets forth in words of such dreadful import as to cast into the shade the descriptions of judgment in the Old Testament, and to fully justify the expression "the wrath of the Lamb"; secondly, the personality of the evil principle,—the Devil, or the accuser, and Satan, or the selfish principle of evil. The world is ultimately said to stand to this principle in the relation of dependence, and men are said to be its children (John viii. 44). The world lies in the Evil One, and out of him the disciples are to be kept. Every deep insight into the mysteries of good and of evil is reduced, in the one case into the "mystery of godliness" in Christ Jesus, and in the other into the "deep things" of Satan. When man sees unbelief in the light of the Spirit, he may discern in it the features of the Evil One, the father of falsehood, who is a murderer from the beginning, and who exalts himself to be worshipped as a god. His kingdom is spoken of as the perversion of the order which God created and sustains, and his power is that of craftiness, a wisdom which is "earthly, natural and devilish," and which dominates the present evil world through its subtle influences. Until redemption comes, he is said to have the power of the law, and has some standing in the divine government as the accuser, and in penal judgments as the angel of death. Being an angel, though the embodiment of evil, he yet serves by the necessity of his being, ruled and overruled by the supreme will.

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[1] See Chapter X., on "Judgment by the Spirit."

When redemption comes he is cast out. St. John describes this spiritual conflict by means of mystic emblems (Rev. xii. 7-12), as the casting out of him who is called the Devil and Satan, and his angels from heaven to earth: "neither was their place found any more in heaven"; for a great voice proclaimed: "Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His

Christ." They that dwell in the heavens may rejoice, but "woe for the earth and for the sea," for the accuser has great wrath, and, knowing that he hath but a short time to work, persecutes where he can. When the disciples returned from their first preaching-journey, rejoicing that even devils were subject to them in His name, Jesus in that experience saw full judgment executed: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke x. 18). The Cross was the judgment of the world in the person of its prince. By this judgment also Jesus saves His people, through the silent but effective operation of the Spirit upon them—not by the cry and the clamour of war, but gently, "breaking not the crushed reed, till He send forth judgment unto victory," and in this victory of the Spirit over sin in the flesh they themselves participate.

Judgment is a process which is continuous,—past, present and future: past, in the judgment of the prince of this world; future, at the second coming of Christ; and present, in individuals, and in the world generally, through all ages. The nearness of judgment in Scripture is ethical rather than temporal, and to hold that Christ and His apostles were mistaken in speaking of it as imminent is based on forgetfulness of this fact. Where the moral signs are present, judgment is near; it is the last hour, and the Judge is at the door. They who know the terrors of the Lord are in the right in announcing it as near, under special moral conditions. All judgment is given to the Son. There are many days of the Son of man in the history of the world, and these all culminate in the "coming of the Lord." Jesus says: "Henceforth,"—from this time on,—"ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64).

The kingdom of good and that of evil grow side by side in perpetual antagonism; for evil ever dogs the footsteps of the good either by opposition or by crafty imitation. It sows its tares in the field already sown by the Son of man. Upon every such sowing there follows a harvest—one of the days of the Son of man. The day of judgment both comes and now is; the history of the Church shows the preparation and the crisis again and again. The parable of judgment is that of the fig-tree, which gives signs that the summer is near. When the moral signs, in course of their cycles, are visible, "know ye that He is nigh, at the doors" (Matt. xxiv. 32).

He who believes not sides with the Evil One, and is involved in his judgment. Man cannot be neutral, for where Christ is not permitted to enter, Satan enters. He who is "begotten of God keepeth him, and the Evil One toucheth him not" (1 John v. 18). The good and the evil are judged according to the law of liberty, which is both the standard of the judgment and an indication of its nature. Saints cannot now do what they will, but every judgment serves to remove some of the obstacles in their way. The command of the judgment day, "Come ye," will set the saints free to enter into the joy of their Lord. Evil also is, at present, checked by the good, and will be, until the voice "Go ye" removes all barriers by setting the seal of retribution upon the evil inclination. The Lord acts in both cases "with the breath of His mouth," or the Spirit, as the agent of the "one Judge, who is able to save and to destroy" (Jas. iv. 12).

Judgment comes when it is prayed for, on the one hand, and when least expected, on the other. To all it comes in a mysterious manner. When it comes, believers have a part in it. They participate in the act of condemnation by which sinners who cannot stand in the congregation of the righteous are judicially cast out. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. vi. 23). The world may murder the witnesses, and make merry at being rid of their reproof; yet to the witnesses there comes a resurrection, and in due course they shall hear the call, "Come up hither" (Rev. xi. 10-12).

(*b*) THE GUIDANCE OF THE SPIRIT (ver. 13).

Jesus adds: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, *these* shall He speak." Jesus Himself was the way along which the disciples were led, and as He was not yet perfected, the truth was not yet perfect, nor would it be until all was finished by His Passion. There could have been no Gospel without the Death and the Resurrection. The promise of guidance by the Spirit forms a part of the description of the victory of the Spirit over all obstacles, physical, mental, and moral, a victory which unlocks for the disciples the treasury of all truth through Him who is the infallible Guide of fallible men. In the narrative of the Acts we find this guidance given to the disciples on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards we see it accentuated under persecutions without and difficulties within the Church.

The apostles gave us the whole of the New Testament through the guidance of the Spirit. He also it is who guides the followers of the apostles into the truth once delivered to their charge. This guidance is conditioned by the reciprocal action of the Church upon the world and of the world upon the Church. The faith of Israel was tested by contact with other nations. It was strengthened by the uncompromising opposition of the true Israel to the world, while at the same time there went on, to some extent, a process of assimilation which enriched the old faith. In the Church great dangers often arise from within, bearing its name, habited in its form, and professing to serve its ends. In Scripture "the world" is opposed to Christ rather than to the Church, which may itself become part of the world. Heresies sprang up at one time as the harvest of old Jewish seed that lay in the ground; at another, through the influence of Gentile thought, life and ideals. Some heresies emphasised a particular truth to the exclusion of all others, or ascribed to subsidiary truths an absolute importance, just as in morality minor points of conduct may be emphasised at the expense of the greater. Such heresies must needs grow, "that they which are approved may be made manifest." Believers who abide in Christ find Him the unity of creation, the end of Providence, and the true solution of all the problems of life. They may often fail to understand their faith completely, yet "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John iv. 4).

The spirit which is in the world, and which assumes the form of truth, but denies its heavenly power, is Antichrist, of which there are many kinds. It is a Christ substituted for the Lord, appropriating the form of Christianity in some doctrine or conduct, presenting itself as an apparent good, material or intellectual, and boasting of its humanitarian, philanthropic or other more directly worldly claims. These systems often attract attention, crying, "Lo, here!" and "Lo, there!" they are mighty in deeds and gifts, and rise from the Church as cloud-forms, the embodiment of the Evil One as an angel of light. Every great departure from the faith assumes a new form, and appears so plausible as to deceive, were it possible, the very elect. These false systems test men and winnow them, like a contagion that takes away those who are predisposed to its influence. At such times, which are ever present more or less, the guidance of the Spirit is to the saints "an anointing from the Holy One" (1 John ii. 18-21). They "know all things," discern their very nature, judge and name them by a spiritual instinct that guides when the reason hesitates.

In such heresies, nevertheless, there has often lain some soul of goodness, which has, even out of things evil, brought profit to the discerning mind. Their errors may indicate lines along which progress may be made, or afford opportunities of confirming the truth directly involved. It was under the stress of conflict with heresies that the creeds were formed as a fence round the inheritance of faith; and they, however much decried, embrace those truths, which are, in the main, the uplands whence the rivers of life flow, the heights that are the first to catch the dawning, and the last to lose the setting beam of light. All the contests in which faith engages result in ultimate gain; for even the perversion of truth may reveal some forgotten or unsuspected aspect of it, and this a discerning faith is ever ready to acknowledge and to receive.

There are periods of marked advance in the evolution of truth. Some reformer appears in the fulness of time, and makes his power felt. The conservation of force operates in the spiritual as in the physical world. When the influence of a particular truth appears to wane as a purely religious force, it becomes part of the social, political and intellectual life of a people, forming a landmark in its history, and working along all the channels of its life. All truths are allied, and in all directions the influence of true religion may be felt. The law is, that if the kingdom of heaven be first sought; other gifts will naturally follow. Times of great conviction produce great hopes, which are never illusory, though, with the lapse of time, they may appear to lose their vitality. Each period of stress, each season of exaltation leaves behind it something that is a substantial addition to the permanent inheritance of the truth. In the change, some truths set, like the stars, and others come to view; yet nothing is wasted, for the crumbs are gathered up to be the store of a coming age.

Each individual believer is guided by the same law. Every duty done, every temptation withstood, every trial endured, and every good impulse obeyed foster the spiritual growth of man. Trifles often serve as great turning-points, and a colourless period bridges over to another that is full of interest. Under all circumstances man's usual sphere of duty is the place wherein his growth in spiritual truth is promised to him; and his ordinary surroundings, however trivial, afford ample opportunities for his growth in grace and truth. The will of God, for each of us, is to be found just where each finds himself, that being the best possible situation for each to find his God. This sphere affords also the best opportunities of realising the hope by which the good Spirit of God will lead the believer, however hard the road may be, "in a plain country" (Ps. cxliii. 10).

> "The path of duty is the way to glory:
> He, that ever following her commands,
> On with toil of heart, and knees and hands,
> Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won

His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun."[1]

It is a moot point whether the Spirit ever leads men out of the Church, and whether He owns them when outside as His own or not. It has been, and is, disputed whether Luther and the Reformers and our Nonconformist Fathers were justified in their acts of secession. The apostles, in deciding such questions, followed the guidance of the Spirit. Was there a Church in Cæsarea? Could there be a Gentile Church at all? The question was answered by asking another: Was the Spirit working among the members, and were His graces seen? If He was seen to work, who was Peter, or any other man, to withstand God and refuse ordinances to those whom He had owned? Was there a Church at Antioch? Barnabas, full of the Spirit, gave the answer when he saw the grace of God. If he asked, Was Paul an apostle? we may ask again, Has he the marks of apostleship? Bishop Andrews, when he was asked whether there could be a Church where there was no bishop, answered, "We *see* Churches without bishops." Where the Spirit operates, His presence ought to be joyfully recognised.

Our Gospel helps us in this matter by giving in chapter ix. a beautiful illustration of the Spirit guiding to the fuller truth by means of persecution. The Saviour, Himself the victim of persecution, saw a man blind from his birth, whom He defended in gentle tones from the aspersion that his blindness was a penal judgment upon him. The man never forgot either His words or His voice. Christ anointed the man's eyes, and sent him to the Pool of

[1] Tennyson, "Wellington."

Siloam, which received its waters from the hill of the Temple. The man obeyed, and received his sight, and though he found that Jesus was hated, he confessed Him publicly. When brought before the Pharisees, he began to bear His reproach, and confessed Him again in the court. The judges fell to disputing among themselves who Jesus was, and they asked the man's opinion, and he, when appealed to, declared Him to be a Prophet. The judges tried to find a flaw in the man's evidence, but failed. Then they asked him to make a full confession, as they now professed to have indisputable evidence that this Jesus was a sinner. But he, planted on the impregnable rock of his own experience, met their dictatorial "We know" by his own, "One thing I know: that, whereas I was blind, now I see." When once again they attempted to confuse the man in his evidence, he, looking upon them with indignation flashing out of his newly formed eyes, returned an ironical answer, implying that they refused to believe obvious and acknowledged moral truths. Then they reviled him, and cast him out. He was the first to be so cast out of the ancient Church. What did Jesus do? He sought out and found the man, and brought him closer unto Himself, never more to return to the Jewish Church. Jesus, finding him in the Temple, asked him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"—a great question for so young a disciple. The man knew the voice, and, silently hoping that Jesus was "the Son of God," sought guidance from Him as a Prophet, saying: "And who is He, Lord?" Jesus called his eyes to witness: "Thou hast both seen Him, and He it is that speaketh with thee." The man answered, "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Him. Cast out by the Jews, he was received by Jesus into His own fold. The curtain falls upon the man on bended knees, looking up with his joyful eyes to an incomprehensible mystery, and upon Jesus looking upon him with the complacency of divine love.

> "On my bended knees
> I recognised Thy purpose clearly shown;
> My vision Thou hast dimmed, that I may see
> Thyself, Thyself alone."

Jesus then explains, in chapter x. 1-10, how in all ages He blesses those who are so cast out. He is the true Shepherd, who, through Himself, enters in righteousness the fold where men are. To Him the Spirit by His authority opens the door. He calls His own sheep, all who hear His voice, by name, each by his own distinctive personality, leading them out, though the sheep, in all instances, are reluctant to go forth ; for they cleave to the old fold. Sterner measures come providentially into play, whereby apostles and reformers, who are led by the Spirit, are also cast out. So Jesus "putteth forth" His own sheep, or "casts them out,"—the same word as in John ix. 34. Then He goes before them, and the sheep follow Him. He is the door of the sheep. All who, before Him, claimed to be the true Shepherd, the owner of the sheep, were thieves and robbers; and all that claim to be the door of the sheep to the privileges of His kingdom are also thieves and robbers, who destroy men's souls through their religious instincts, "seething the kid in its mother's milk." They use force where they can, and blandishment where they cannot. In Christ the sheep go in and out, finding liberty, life and peace. Following the Guide who goes before them, they are ever blessed, and become a blessing ; taught of God, they are led in the way, the highway of the universe, the way everlasting, heeding not the voices that call upon them to return, for their King is to the fore.

In leading His people onward, the Spirit unveils the future, and reveals to them things that are to come. The words, "He shall declare unto you the things about to come," contain a further promise, which was expressly fulfilled in the prophetic gifts conferred upon the apostles. This gift of prophecy is found not only in passages or books that are prophetic in form, but is an element that pervades all apostolic teaching. "Coming things" comprehend the whole New Dispensation, which is progressively and vitally developing. These things the Spirit "declares" to the disciples, so that the information becomes their own. The voice of the Spirit in them is the voice of Christ, for "what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak." Every Christian doctrine looks forward, and every believer has his vision of the future. The prophets of old read the coming salvation in the light of the moral government of God. They grasped the future in a word, a creative word, and waited to see some signs of its coming in Providence. They watched for the signs of its coming as for a cloud floating up the azure blue, often no bigger than a man's hand. The pleading of Abraham was based on God's justice, which is an active power that produces events in time. Jeremiah says, "Thy word was found,"—the causal word—and Habakkuk, having received the word, stood on his tower to watch for signs of its fulfilment. The apostles strove by prayer and obedience for the fulfilment of the "words" delivered unto them, not because they were doubtful, but because they were certain. Jesus, who opened the sealed book containing all future things, can give a prophetic vision to all men. Conscience through Him sees the judgment day. The heart sees the joy that is set before it; Christian workers and Christian assemblies, through their faith, possess the future.

Before praying, Jesus again, as at first, commands them to be of good courage; for, though cast down, they would conquer; though dying daily, they would live. He had conquered the world, subjecting the flesh to the Spirit, so that their faith in Him would secure the victory in the battle itself; and the spirit of the victory would perfect them into one—one with the Son, one with the Father and one with one another in the Spirit for evermore.

XVII.

THE SPIRIT OF BROTHERHOOD.

John xx. 17-23.

WE have found that the holiness of God, though transcendent, is nigh unto man. The risen and exalted Lord also, whose life is the Spirit, is nearer to His people now that He is gone away than when He was present in the flesh. He rose in the power of Headship, the firstborn of many brethren, of whom He is not now ashamed, for He can communicate to them a common life, and form them into a kingdom of His own. Jesus had previously used the word "brother" to express affinity of spirit, as well as the word "friends." Now that He is risen from the dead He calls them "brethren," saying, "Go to My brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and My God, and your God"; and these words, while distinguishing, yet emphasise the resemblance between His own relation to the Father and theirs.

The Lord was now able to give unto the disciples the indwelling Spirit of regeneration, as He had described Him in John iii., to be in them as the power of faith, praying for, and receiving, the Spirit of power on the Pentecost. But Jesus, though risen, could not give Him previous to His Ascension. They now entered into the privileges of the heavenly life in kinship with Christ, being born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man," but being united in a common divine life, in a common interest of desire, one divine Will absorbing all other wills into itself.

The disciples were scattered each unto his own; but when the tidings of the resurrection of their Lord reached them, they soon sought each other in order to communicate the report, and on that day, when it was evening, they came together with hearts trembling between fear of the Jews and the stirring of a strange, unutterable hope. Suddenly, in the midst of them stood Jesus, saying, "Peace be unto you," the perfect salvation of the perfected Saviour. He gave them bodily evidence of His identity, and then, again saluting them, He said, "Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Jesus had His mission in Himself before He received it in manifestation and power. He now endowed the disciples with the Spirit as the redemptive gift of life, which would be in them the constant impulse of their mission, and which would prepare them to receive the Spirit of power. The brethren became the fellow-workers of Jesus, because their very salvation made them sons, or servants, of God.

The Lord then breathed upon them, saying, "Receive ye [the] Holy Spirit." This was the personal indwelling Spirit of Christ, who was now His breath, His life, the life of His body, and whom He breathed upon them as a household, a family, so as to quicken them into a new spiritual state. As the first man was quickened by the breath of the Spirit of God, so the Church as a new community came now into existence by the Holy Spirit, the breath of the risen Christ. This gift, which takes its place appropriately between the Resurrection and the Ascension, this fruit of His death, this pledge of Pentecost, constituted the disciples into an abiding community apart from the world. When they came together on that evening they little thought that their act was a separation from the world, but Jesus sealed it as a permanent separation. The true Church must henceforth, by the necessity of its new life, come and hold together. When scattered by persecution, its members became centres of living forces to quicken others. When Church members are indifferent to the communion of saints, and their adhesion is weakened, it is a sign of decadence, and soon the place of such a Church knows it no more.

The Holy Spirit gave this visible unity to the Church by lifting the disciples into the heavenly places. A great change came silently over them, so that they began to see things in a new light. The feeling of separation from Jesus took some time to pass away and to give place to a longing for the promise of the Father, for whose power, in the light of the Holy Spirit already given them, they saw their spiritual need. They desired to communicate to others what they themselves possessed, but they knew not how, and so they waited and prayed for the Spirit. In the light of their own regenerate life they understood the life and power of Jesus while He was with them, and they knew that the Spirit promised them was the Spirit that wrought in their Lord. They kept in the company of one another, continuing in prayer until the day of Pentecost.

In explanation of the nature of the gift of the Holy Spirit granted unto them, Jesus adds, "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." The Holy Spirit formed them as an assembly into a Church, a corporate unity, in which the Spirit of regeneration constituted the power of the keys. They had power in their corporate life to judge alike those whom they received into the glory of the Lord, and those to whom they refused admittance, and those whom they expelled, being endowed with the gift of discernment of spirits. The Spirit was in them, as a kingly power of comfort and of discipline; it was not a gift unto a few, but the common heritage of all the regenerate. Cyprian taught that all the lay people could even judge their teachers, and ought to separate themselves from a sinner who is set over them. In Matthew xvi. 19 a promise similar to this is given to Peter as representing the disciples, and in this connection the Church is mentioned. The promise is given again to them all in Matthew xviii. 18, where the Church is again mentioned. Now the promise is fulfilled unto all who were assembled together on that evening, and who represented those born of the Spirit in all ages. Believers can speak forgiveness and peace where they perceive a soul in a condition to receive them. In all such cases there are two remissions and two retainings, one the complement of the other, the earthly one witnessing to the heavenly. Establishing thus a kingdom of heaven upon earth in men, the Spirit in them cried, "Abba, Father." This is the simple cry of love rather than a petition—the response to the voice of Divine Love given by the Spirit, who says, "Thou art My child."

The service of the sons will continue for ever. Present trials are only the conditions of the perfection of sonship, and are not of its essence. Christianity looks to the future, to a revelation, a priesthood and a kingdom, when "there shall be no night," "and the sea is no more." Science is pessimistic, because it sees the end of the present order without seeing a coming order beyond, when God will say, "Return, ye children of men," in a new springtime of life. All things say at present, "We perish: Thou art," and there is a "returning" that imports the times of the restoration of all things (Acts iii. 21), a common regeneration (Matt. xix. 28), a new earth and a new heaven. Science demonstrates the unity of all creation and its order by affirming the predominance of law; Christianity affirms the unity and the order by placing man at the head of all things. The work of the Spirit is described in Romans viii. as leading step by step to freedom, to immortality, to sonship and heirship with Christ. The Spirit casts His beams upon all suffering and sorrow as a covenant rainbow upon tears, solving the problem of the universe by the perfection of the children of God. When the door of the future opens for man, it opens also for all created things, so that in the great anthem that John heard, the four living creatures which represent creation join with the redeemed. Creation looks unto the sons, the sons unto the Son, and He unto God.

All creation stands related to the Son of man. He who perfects all things is found to be the "Lamb that hath been slain from the foundations of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8). In Christ God reconciles all things unto Himself (Col. i. 20) —a consummation to be realised in the future. He has our body, which is of the earth, in spiritual union with His Person, and the power that changed Him will also change the bodies of His people—a thought which opens out, for all creation, possibilities beyond the knowledge of man. Angels, whose sphere of service is in creation and Providence, worship Him, and, in worshipping Him, minister to those who inherit salvation. Christ restores the totality of things into harmony by the efficacy of His sacrifice. The way of restoration is along the path of the curse. This was dimly suggested in Eden, when man's sustenance was made to depend upon toil and the continuity of the race upon travail. Yet in the Old Testament suffering is retrospective and penal in nature; and there is no word for the "suffering" (πάθημα) of the New Testament. In the New Testament suffering is prospective, and the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ is sought after as much as that of the power of His resurrection. The great question concerning suffering is no longer "Who hath sinned?" but, "Of what work of God is this the medium?" The curse is turned into a blessing, and the dissolution of death is the entrance into indissoluble life.

In Ephesians i. 10, 11, some intimation is given us of the place of believers in the totality of things. This totality is there considered not as an object to be reconciled "by Christ," but as in vital connection "in Him." St. Paul states that God had set forth all things in His purpose, to unite them in one great economy, "a dispensation of the fulness of the times." This dispensation is said to be a summing-up of all things *in* Christ. The words to "sum up" are used, in Romans xiii. 9, of love as a spiritual principle, a life-power that fulfils all righteousness. All things are summed up in Christ, who becomes, by His Spirit the life principle of all things in heaven, the spiritual order, and on earth, the natural order. When man, in his spirit, in the affections of his soul, and in his body as the spirit's fitting tenement, becomes perfect, it will be found that his perfection affects the whole creation, and thus all things will be brought into harmony.

The ancient tabernacle represented all things, and the Person of Jesus Christ is the true tabernacle. The old tabernacle had its outward court and its altar; it had its sanctuary of human service, where also the angelic powers of the cherubim were depicted ; it had also its Holy of Holies, with its emblems of God dwelling with men. When all outward, all human, and all divine things are in concord, each part will have its fulness of meaning, and the meaning of the whole will be the full revelation of Christ.

The Apostle then further states that " in Him we were made a heritage," God's inheritance, His peculiar treasure, His children, who, by the Spirit, reign with Christ, sitting with Him on His throne, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, prophets, priests and kings.

Thus the Spirit, who of old moved upon the surface of the deep, imbuing it with forces that issued forth in light and life, is also the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who moves, strives with, quickens and perfects men for another day of light and life, when all things shall be made anew. The children will then be owned and presented by Christ, He in each and in all, to " My Father and your Father, My God and your God."

This will be the ascension of the Spirit in the saints, in whom His glory will shine forth. In Psalm xxiv. there are two ascensions of the Lord, with two songs that describe their nature. The Psalmist declares the earth to be the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, and describes the holy character of those who are deemed worthy to stand and serve in His holy place. Then follow two entrances of the King of glory. In the first instance, He enters alone as the mighty hero in battle ; in the second, He enters as the leader of a vast multitude. As He enters alone, we hear the ancient gates called unto, " Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and the King of glory shall come in." Then comes the question, " Who is this King of glory ? " and the sublime reply follows, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Once more the cry is raised, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and the King of glory shall come in." Once more is the question echoed back, "Who is this King of glory?" to receive the final answer, "The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory." The consummation of the Spirit's work and His glorification will be reached when He who ascended alone shall, as the Lord of Hosts, present His glorified people before the Throne.

Printed by Hazell, Watson, and Viney, Ld., London and Aylesbury.

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